



**COMS 265** - Mass Communication (5800)  
**Room:** MUS 209  
**Instructor:** Larry Leach  
**Office Phone:** (310) 660-3593 x3716  
**Website** – www.professorleach.com  
**E-mail:** info@professorleach.com

**Meeting times:** M/W 11:15a – 12:40p  
**Required Text:**  
*Media & Culture 12<sup>th</sup> Ed.*  
**Author:** (Campbell, Martin, Fabos)  
**Materials:** Notebook, 1 Pack of Scantrons



<p><b>Office Hours &amp; Location:</b> MUS 132E  <b>M/W:</b> 2:45p – 3:45p  <b>T/Th:</b> 9:00a – 9:30a  <b>T/Th:</b> 2:00p – 3:00p</p> <p><b><u>COURSE DESCRIPTION</u></b></p> <p>In this course students will compose, present, and evaluate original speeches. Emphasis is placed on audience analysis, topic selection, research, evidence, organization, delivery, and critical analysis of persuasive communication. Students are required to attend out-of- class speaking events.</p> <p><i>3 units; Recommended Preparation: eligibility for English 1A Credit, degree applicable - Transfer CSU, UC</i></p> <p><b>Note** COMS 265 &amp; JOURN 12 are the same course</b></p>	<p><b><u>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLO)</u></b></p> <p>Upon completion of course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand and describe the history and communication theories associated with mass communication.</li> <li>2. Identify and explain rules and regulations that govern mass communication.</li> <li>3. Analyze and describe the impact of new media, movies, television, and music on society and culture.</li> </ol>
---	---

**Classroom rules/Conduct:**

- Please turn off/silence all phones prior to the start of the class & keep stored during the class meeting
- Be respectful of your fellow students and instructor during class discussions
- Students are expected to adhere to the El Camino College Student Code of Conduct
- Please do not bring plated food into the classroom

**Attendance & Participation:** Attendance is taken each class meeting.

- Please fill in front empty seats during class meetings; it will be required on student presentation days
- Attendance is expected in this class.
- Students who exceed 10% of the scheduled class meetings MAY be dropped with a “W”
- Six (6) absences prior to the drop date May 15 will result in a drop from the course.

Arriving late & Leaving Early also applies to absence count. If you wish to drop it's YOUR responsibility to make sure you have been dropped by the deadline.

Perfect Attendance (no absences of any kind or late arrivals = 25 bonus pts)

Students should complete assigned readings in order to examine ideas, concepts, theories and participate in class discussion.

**Academic Dishonesty / Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by representing the work of another as one's own without the necessary and appropriate acknowledgment. If you plagiarize, you are cheating yourself and if you are caught cheating or using others work without crediting them, you will face a minimum penalty of a failing grade on the assignment.

### Important dates:

- March 1 Last day to drop without a "W"
- May 15 Last day to drop with a "W"

<u>Graded Assignments:</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>Graded Exams</u>	<u>Pts</u>	<u>Grade Scale</u>
Media Identity Assignment	25	Test 1	100	671 – 750 = A
Current Event Article (2x25pt)	50	Test 2 (Midterm)	150	597 – 670 = B
Media Research Project	90	Test 3	100	521 – 596 = C
Research Presentation	10	Test 4 (Final)	150	447 – 520 = D
Classwork	75			Below 446 = F

### Homework Assignments & Make Up Work: **\*\*\*Very Important\*\*\***

**REMINDER - I WILL NOT PRINT OUT OR STAPLE YOUR ASSIGNMENTS FOR YOU**

Assignments completed outside of class **MUST** be turned in during class meetings, typed & stapled  
Handwritten, emailed or unstapled assignments will **NOT** be accepted or graded if included in a homework submission

If you do not have access to a computer at home or a printer, you will need to use the computer lab or make arrangements in order to complete and print out the assignments on time.

**Computers, Procrastination & Murphy's Law:** It is unacceptable to come to class without paperwork/homework due to printing problems or other technical difficulties. Don't wait until the last minute to write, print or carry out your work. If you do, your computer will most likely malfunction. ALWAYS make a redundant copy of anything you do. This applies to computer files and paperwork. It is your responsibility to have these materials when required.

Make up work will not be considered unless arrangements are made prior to or on the due date for assignment or exam. Contact me if you need to discuss/request make up work.

### Test Preparation

There are 4 (four) exams in this course that make-up a majority of your semester grade. It is important that you take the time to review and prepare for them.

The textbook is important in preparing for the exams in this class. Without the ability to review the text it will be difficult to prepare for and do well on the exams.

Students often attempt to use previous versions of the text, however in this class outdated text will affect the information in at least half of the textbook chapters.

Purchase, Rent, Share, etc... what matters is that you have access to the current version as you review for the exams.

**I will follow the syllabus unless unforeseen circumstance arises. I reserve the right to change the syllabus should it be warranted and will notify the class promptly.**

There may be some videos shown in class that support the content that is covered  
Chapters should be reviewed PRIOR to the class meeting they are discussed

**Week 1 – Feb 17 – 19**

- **Feb. 17 – Washington Holiday (Campus closed)**
- Course Introduction & Discussion, Syllabus review

**Week 2 – Feb 24 – 26**

- Chap 1 – Mass Communication: A critical approach
- Chap 8 – Newspapers: The Rise and Decline of Modern Journalism

**Week 3 – March 2 – 4 – (Introduce - Identity Paper Assignment)**

- Chap 9 – Magazines in the age of Specialization
- Magazine/Media Images Activity

**Week 4 – March 9 – 11**

- Chap 10 – Books and the power of print
- **Current Events – Round 1**

**Week 5 – March 16 – 18**

- **Test #1 (Chap 1,8,9,10)**
- Chap 15 – Media Effects & Cultural approaches to research

**Week 6 – March 23 – 25 – (Identity Paper Due - Wed)**

- Chap 14 – The Culture of Journalism: Values, Ethics & Democracy
- Media Ethics/Impact activity: Understanding Media Morality

**Week 7 – March 30 – April 1 – Introduce Team/Group Project**

- Chap 16 – Legal Controls & Freedom of Expression
- **Current Events – Round 2**

**Week 8 – April 6 – 8**

- **Test #2 - Mid-Term (Includes ALL reviewed chapters and content)**
- Chap 2 – The Internet, *digital media*, and *convergence*

**SPRING BREAK – April 13 – 15**

**Week 9 – April 20 – 22 (Group/Team Project Topics Due)**

- **Research Project Lab Day**
- Chap 3 – Digital Gaming and the Media Playground

**Week 10 – April 27 – 29**

- **Current Events – Round 3**
- Chap 11 – Advertising and commercial culture

### **Week 11 – May 4 – 6**

- Chap 12 – Public Relations and framing the message
- **Advertising/PR Activity**

### **Week 12 – May 11 – 13**

- **Test #3 (Chap 2,11,12,13)**
- Chap 7 – Movies and the impact of images

### **Week 13 – May 18 – 20**

- Chap 6 – Television and Cable: The power of visual culture
- Chap 5 – Popular Radio and the origins of broadcasting

### **Week 14 – May 25 – 27**

- Chap 4 – Sound Recording and Popular Music
- Recording/Music – Discussion/Activity**

### **Week 15 – June 1 – 3**

- May 28 – Memorial Day (Campus closed)
- Group Project Presentations – (Due – \_\_\_\_\_)**

### **Week 16 – June 8 – 10**

- Group Project Presentations – (Due – \_\_\_\_\_)**
- Final Exam – (Includes ALL chapters and content covered after midterm)**

### **Course Objectives**

1. Describe Best Practices of Mass Communication in the U.S.
2. Identify key historical events in the U.S. mass communication development
3. Evaluate the importance of print media on developing an informed citizenry
4. Evaluate the credibility of the medium versus the message
5. Describe technological innovations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century American cinema and impact on mass audiences
6. Compare/Contrast the changes in consumer consumption of electronic media from radio to contemporary times
7. Chart the development of the film business and film as an art from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through contemporary times
8. Differentiate between traditional mass media production and digital media production
9. Identify new options in production, distribution and exhibition afforded to media companies through digital technology
10. Evaluate the cultural impact of the Digital Revolution on consumers & producers of new media
11. Analyze key legislation and legal decisions and their impact on the media and consumer
12. Critique mass mediums as political, social and cultural institutions
13. Defend the need for government of self-regulation of mass media



# Descriptions of Graded Assignments

## IDENTITY ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment is to prepare a typed **three to four** page paper on your identity, that includes how mass media has effected or cultivated your identity. Consider media that you have been exposed to from your earliest memories, as well as what you are exposed to now. This assignment will ask you to discuss your class, race, and gender and how you believe they affect your identity when consuming media content.

## CURRENT EVENT ARTICLES

Each student will prepare a typed review of two articles during the semester based on the current event review guidelines and present them to the class.

## GROUP / TEAM PROJECT & PROPOSAL -

*Topic Proposal MUST be turned in and approved prior to starting the project.  
Once approved group members will be given access to project submission site*

Through a group blog site you will research and present a media effect or a current first amendment issue in the news. This assignment will consist of research & scholarly/academic article reviews examples related to the group project, written and visual supporting material along with a presentation of completed work.

**Details and assignment criteria will be provided in class.**

## PRESENTATION OF CLASSWORK

In order to receive full credit for some class work, students will be required to present a brief overview of their assignment to the class throughout the course of the semester.

## CLASSWORK

In class activities/exercises and presentations (Not eligible for make up)

Throughout the course, there will be a variety of scored in-class activities related to course material and content to provide additional insight or experience on Mass Communications principles and elements.

## EXAMS

The exams for this course make up more than 60% of the final grade and rely heavily on access to and review of the course textbook for success. Students who disregard the importance of the textbook and are not able to review for exams tend to have more difficulty achieving consistently strong scores.

**Test 1 – Unit 1** – (Chapters 1,8,9,10)

**Test 2 – Mid-Term – Unit 2** (Chap 14,15,16) plus written element

**Test 3 – Unit 3** – (Chapters 2,3,11,12)

**Test 4 – Final Exam – Unit 4** (Chap 4,5,6,7) plus written element

---

**\*\*Students with missing assignments will not be eligible for any Extra Credit that is offered during the semester\*\***

## COMS 265 IDENTITY ASSIGNMENT

**This assignment is worth 25 points – You should include at least (FOUR) different forms of Mass Media to complete the items below for this assignment.**

Your assignment is to prepare a typed double-spaced **three to four page** paper on your identity and how it has been influenced by the media over the years. ***(Structure the reflection based on media types OR era's of your life)***

How has mass media effected or cultivated your identity? Please consider media that you have been exposed to from your earliest memories, as well as what you are exposed to now.

What were your favorite media characters or stories growing up & why? How do you believe they affect(ed) your identity? How do you feel that your culture, race, etc is portrayed in the media today and what effect does it have?

What kinds of music & movies have you consumed throughout your life, what has influenced your choices? Have they changed or stayed the same, why? Does your media preferences influence other areas of your life, language, fashion, behaviors etc.?

Reflect on the impact advertisements, social media, the internet, and access to 24 hour information has influenced you in terms of perceptions and your place in society.

How about books, novels, religious texts, have you ever been a reader? What influenced your book choices, do you still read the same content or amount today. Are you a heavy or light media consumer? Is there a difference between the two? If so, how or why?

Remember that in its broadest sense institutions that distribute messages to many individuals are delivering mass media. How has racism, ethics, class, sexism in media affected your sense of self and your regard for others? How have your use and exposure to language (English or foreign) affected you?

This is an opportunity to reflect on your own media consumption throughout your life and how it has evolved and influenced who you are today. Put some thought into developing this assignment focus the content and information on **YOU & YOUR IDENTITY** and submit it by the due date.

## COMS 265 News Current Events

To complete this assignment you will need to find two (2) Newspaper (News) articles that you find interesting and are no more than 2 weeks old on the day you present them.

The articles must be **NEWS** articles that are approximately 400 words & should have substance to them. Don't select reviews (*movies, plays, restaurants, sports run downs, etc*) or sports game reviews

**1<sup>st</sup> Article:** MUST be related to some issue related to the mass media\*\*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Article:** Should be a newsworthy articles that fits one the following news elements: **Proximity, Impact, Human Interest, Unusual, Prominence, Quantity, Timeliness**

**Websites or web printed articles (even Newspaper sites) will not be accepted (Not even for partial credit)**

Articles must be the original article or a photo copy of it

### What you turn in:

*You will need to turn in the original article or a copy along with a TYPED summary that addresses the following items. (1-2 page summary for each article)*

- Introduction of the article headline  
*"The article I am going to share today is \_\_\_\_\_"*
- What is the source of your article?  
*Name and Date of publication.*
- What is the article talking about?  
*Give the audience a detailed summary*
- What element of news is this article covering
- Who is the target audience for this article & why  
*(who would most likely come across or read it)*
- Why do you think that it is an important/interesting article?

**Presentation of your articles will cover the above items on the due date \_\_\_\_\_**

**The written summary will need to be turned in prior to presenting and you will need to be familiar enough with the article content to summarize the above items in your own words or from 2-3 notecards.**

**\*\*Mass Media Related Article:** *If you wait until the last minute (day before, morning of to find a media article, unless you are lucky you will be frustrated/stressed because they can be tough to find)*

This can be an article about laws related to the mass media, new media products that can impact consumers or media businesses, issues related to the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment freedom of press, media censorship. It should be about the media industry elements or business practices. **(Ask for clarity if unsure)**

The media article **SHOULD NOT** be about a new movie, TV show, album. It should not be about a media personality or person. No reviews, critiques of media products or opinion pieces about the media.

The article should not be an article that references the media but is really about something else. (*E.g. Twitter shows Newport-Mesa students toasting over a swastika made from red plastic cups*)

This article is about the actions of the students, twitter (the internet media) is the channel used but the article is not about twitter

---

## **ADA Compliance**

Accommodations: It is the policy of the El Camino Community College District to encourage full inclusion of people with disabilities in all programs and services (BP1600 and BP4055). Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class should contact the ECC Special Resource Center (SRC) at (310) 660-3295 as soon as possible to ensure that they are able to fully participate

\*The instructor for the course does not determine/identify accommodations, but will fulfill any accommodations that have been identified and/or approved through the SRC or student services division.

Students who contact the instructor regarding accommodations will be referred to the special resources center or the dean of student services for assistance.

## **Title IX Employee Reporting Obligations**

You should know that if you reveal gender-based or sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking or intimate partner violence to any instructor, we are required by law to report the problem to the Office of Staff and Student Diversity. However, psychologists are not required to report to the Office of Staff and Student Diversity. You can call the Student Health Center at 310.660.3643 or visit their website: <http://www.elcamino.edu/student-services/health>.

## **Student Resources and Student Success Act**

Student Resources: Your success is the number one priority at El Camino College. College resources to help you succeed include computer labs, tutoring centers, health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. For a comprehensive list of Academic Resources and Support Programs, visit: [http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/vpas/aims/aims\\_docs/ARSP.pdf](http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/vpas/aims/aims_docs/ARSP.pdf)

Student Success Act: New state regulations may affect your eligibility for financial aid, your registration priority, and your ability to repeat classes. For more information, visit: [http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/vpas/aims/aims\\_docs/S3PF15.pdf](http://www.elcamino.edu/administration/vpas/aims/aims_docs/S3PF15.pdf). After completing 15 units or prior to the end of the third semester, all students must declare a major and complete a comprehensive educational plan. Schedule an appointment to see a counselor for an up-to-date educational plan by visiting: <https://www.elcamino.edu/student-services/co/appointments.asp>.

## **Standards of Student Conduct**

Administrative Procedure 5500: Student conduct at El Camino College must conform to federal and state laws and District policies and procedures. Standards will apply to all students on District owned facilities or controlled property or at District-sponsored or supervised functions or electronic media. Violation of such laws, policies, and procedures or behavior adversely affecting suitability as a student, will lead to student disciplinary action. Student disciplinary actions as noted in Board Policy 5500, Administrative Procedure 5500, and Administrative Procedure 5520 may be taken against any person who engages in behavior defined as misconduct.