COMMON COURSE OUTLINE: Course discipline/number/title: MCOM 1110: Introduction to Mass Communication

A. CATALOG DESCRIPTION
1. Credits: 3
2. Hours/Week: 3
3. Prerequisites (Course discipline/number): College level reading and writing
4. Co-requisites (Course discipline/number): None

This course will cover the nature, function and social responsibilities of mass media. Areas include media literacy, propaganda, newspapers, magazines, radio, music recording, book publishing, advertising, films, public relations, freedom of speech/press, politics and media ethics. Pro- and anti-social effects of media consumption will also be examined.

B. DATE LAST REVISED (Month, year): September, 2012

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS:
1. The ubiquity of mass media
2. Mass communication definitions and comparisons to other forms of communication
3. Media as a profit-driven business
4. The history of various media and their impact on society
5. The economics of mass media
6. Legal issues related to publishing and broadcasting (freedom of press, copyright law, libel law, privacy)
7. Persuasive impact of advertising
8. Overview of the goals and techniques of public relations
9. Issues in the evolution of digital media and the convergence of media
10. The use of mass media by political campaigns
11. Philosophical principles that influence media ethics
12. FCC/FTC regulations and the role of government regulation of media
13. Overview of mass communication theories and research including McLuhan, media effects research, and uses and gratifications

D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (GENERAL): The student will be able to:
1. Trace the major events in the historical development of media: radio, recordings film, TV, print, and digital media.
2. Explain the influence of the media as a profit-making industry.
3. Compare the key features of mass communication to other forms of communication.
4. Describe the pros and cons of media ownership consolidation.
5. Define libel and name the tests and defenses for a libel case.
6. Describe the role of government in regulating radio and TV broadcast content.
7. Discuss how new technologies affect the delivery of content in the radio, TV and movie industries.
8. Name the agencies and responsibilities of the federal government in the regulation of advertising.
9. Differentiate between public relations copy, news stories, feature stories and editorial content.
10. Explain the agenda setting function of the mass media.
11. Explain the theory of cultivation analysis and the effects that it predicts.
12. Explain how Nielsen and Arbitron ratings work and the criticisms of each.
13. Identify current trends that will affect the major media industries in the future.
14. Summarize the research findings in the area of how media affects the behavior of children.
15. Explain the effects of media on the political process in the United States.
16. Explain the four ways U.S. law defines invasion of privacy and how this relates to media industries.

E. LEARNING OUTCOMES (MNTC):
Goal 2/Critical Thinking: The student will be able to:
1. Gather factual information and apply it to a given problem in a manner that is relevant, clear, comprehensive, and conscious of possible bias in the information selected.
E. LEARNING OUTCOMES (MNTC): Continued. . .

2. Imagine and seek out a variety of possible goals, assumptions, interpretations, or perspectives, which can give alternative meanings or solutions to given situations or problems.
3. Analyze the logical connections among the facts, goals, and implicit assumptions relevant to a problem or claim; generate and evaluate implications that follow from them.
4. Recognize and articulate the value assumptions, which underlie and affect decisions, interpretations, analyses, and evaluations made by ourselves and others.

Goal 5/History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences: The student will be able to:

1. Employ the methods and data that historians and social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition.
2. Examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
3. Use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
4. Develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.

Goal 9/Ethical and Civic Responsibility: Students will be able to:

1. Understand and apply core concepts (rights, obligations, politics, justice, liberty) to specific issues.
2. Analyze and reflect on the relationships between ethical issues and legal, social and scientific issues.
3. Analyze and reflect on the ethical dimensions of legal, social, and scientific issues.
4. Recognize the diversity of political motivations and interests of others.

F. METHODS FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING:

May include any or all of the following:
1. Objective exams
2. Quizzes
3. Small group discussions and projects
4. Oral presentations
5. Written journals
6. Essay exams
7. Or any other activities deemed appropriate by an individual instructor

G. RCTC CORE OUTCOME(S) Addressed:

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Global Awareness/Diversity

H. SPECIAL INFORMATION (if any): None