



SYLLABUS
AMERICAN NEWS MEDIA HISTORY
SJB 421
SPRING 2020
TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS, 2:20-3:40 P.M.
JRH 322

Professor: Dr. Rich Shumate

Email: rich.shumate@wku.edu (emails answered with 24 hours)

Office: JRH 225 (MMTH 225)

Prerequisites: None

Office Hours: Mondays, 12:30-1:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m.; or by appointment.

REQUIRED BOOKS

Fellow, A. (2013). *American Media History* (3rd Ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning.

Note: A used or e-book version of this textbook is acceptable for this class.

Washburn, P. (2006). *The African American Newspaper*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Paine, T. (1775). *Common Sense*.

Note: This book is available for \$3 on Amazon.com

Other assigned readings will either be posted on the Class Schedule on Blackboard or be available through the WKU Library.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to provide students with a grounding in the history of American journalism, from the Colonial Era through the advent of television and into latter-day developments. Journalism history will be evaluated from political, social/cultural, economic, and technological perspectives, with an emphasis on the role that journalism plays in a democratic society. Minority perspectives, including the African American, Native American, and Latino presses, are considered, as are the role of women in journalism and journalism's role in fostering and sustaining efforts at social reform. Various schools and theories in the field of journalism history will be considered. Historical research as an academic discipline will also be explored, and students will demonstrate the ability to both evaluate the historical research of others and conduct research themselves.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the major historical trends in, and the development of, U.S. media/journalism history.
- Understand the relationships between developments in U.S. media/journalism and political, social/cultural, economic, and technological changes in the larger American society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of key figures and events in U.S. media/journalism history and understand their importance to larger developments in American history.
- Appreciate the contributions made to media/journalism history by non-majority and historically disenfranchised groups.
- Understand how media historians conduct research, as well as the ingredients required for high-quality research.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct in-depth research on a media history topic and present their findings in a collaborative research project.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This class will use Blackboard for submission of assignments, grading, and posting of class materials. Students are responsible for keeping up to date with assignments and announcements posted on the Class Schedule, which is the home page on the course's Blackboard site.

For each unit in this course, students will:

- Complete assigned readings and study questions.
- Attend lectures and complete assignments based on the lectures.
- Participate in class discussions.

In addition, over the course of the semester, students will also:

- Complete two exams.
- Complete two book reports (reading list will be provided) and present their findings to the class.
- Work with classmates on a research project on a media history topic.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Grading Scale

A=90-100

B=80-90

C=70-79

D=60-69

F=Below 60

Exams (25 percent): Two exams will be given, one near the midpoint of the semester and the other on the last day of class; each will be worth 100 points. The first test will cover material from the first half of the class; the second test will cover material from the second half of the class. Each exam will count 15 percent of the final grade. Exams will be administered using Blackboard; students should bring their laptops or tablets to class on exam days. Exams can only be made up in the case of excused absences cleared in advance. (Note: There is no comprehensive final exam in this course.)

Research Project (25 percent): The research project will allow students to demonstrate their grasp of U.S. news media history and historical analysis by creating a museum-quality historical exhibit on a media history topic. Students will be graded both on the overall quality of the project and their individual contributions to it.

Class Prep/Class Wrap Assignments (25 percent): Before each class session and after Thursday's class, students will be assigned to complete short assignments related to that week's readings and lectures. Most of these assignments will be posted to Blackboard to be completed on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays.

Book Reports/Presentations (25 Percent): Students will select from a reading list of media history books and complete two book reports on their selections. Students will then present their findings to the class in a brief, 5-minute presentation.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance and participation are necessary for student success in SJB 421. Students are asked to arrive prepared and on time by 2:20 p.m. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session; students who arrive after attendance has been taken must check in with Dr. Shumate after class. **Students who arrive later than 10 minutes after the start of class will be considered absent.**

This class is scheduled to meet 28 times; students can have **no more than three unexcused absences**. Each absence after three will result in a 3 percent reduction in the student's final grade in this class.

Excused Absences: Accepted excuses for absences include illness, family emergencies, university activities, jury duty, military obligations, and religious observances. Your professor may ask for documentation to verify the excuse. If you have any questions about whether something qualifies as

an excused absence, please consult Dr. Shumate **before** the absence, if circumstances permit. **It is the student's responsibility to make sure that an absence has been excused.**

Students who have an illness that keeps them out of class for an extended period of time or students participating in university activities that have a significant travel schedule should consult Dr. Shumate.

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATION

SJB 421 is a upper-division 400-level class, so students are expected to be prepared to participate in each class session. As part of the learning process, students will be called on to make comments and engage with classmates during class discussions and should be prepared to do so. Our class should also be a safe space for students to express themselves, so please be respectful and courteous to your classmates.

DROPPING CLASS: The last day to drop this class with a grade of "W" is Wednesday, March 25.

DIGITAL DEVICES

To create a non-disruptive learning environment for everyone, students are asked to silence their cell phones during class and only use technology if doing so is part of a class activity. This is a small class; you will be called out if your use of technology becomes a distraction.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students enrolled in Western Kentucky University and the School of Journalism and Broadcasting are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable and can result in serious consequences.

Plagiarism - To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of students must be their own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism.

Cheating - No student shall receive or give assistance not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or in the preparation of an essay, laboratory report, problem assignment, or other project that is submitted for purposes of grade determination.

Disposition of Offenses - Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal. The faculty member may also present the case to the University Disciplinary Committee through the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs for disciplinary sanctions.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, room 1074 of the Student Success Center. The phone number is 270.745.5004. or email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

TITLE IX SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/ASSAULT/DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT POLICIES

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040), copies of which can be found at <https://www.wku.edu/policies/university/>

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398, or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429, or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or

sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU’s Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator.

If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU’s Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

AEJMC CORE VALUES AND COMPETENCIES

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies. The core values and competencies addressed in SJB 421 include:

- Understand and apply principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in the United States.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Note: Schedule subject to change; check class schedule on Blackboard for updates and assigned readings.

Tuesday	Thursday
Jan. 28 Introduction to Class	Jan. 30 Lecture: The Discipline of Media History Discussion: Special Topics Intro to Class Project
Feb. 4 Lecture: Colonial Voices to Revolution Class Project Discussion	Feb. 6 Discussion: • Common Sense & The Federalist Papers • Female Voices in Colonial Media Class Project Topic Selection
Feb. 11 Kentucky Museum Visit <i>Class session will be held at Kentucky Museum</i>	Feb. 13 Lecture: A Free Press for a Free People Class Project Planning
Feb. 18 Lecture: A Press for the Masses/Frontier Press Special Topic: History/Changing Views of the First Amendment	Feb. 20 Lecture: African-American Voices Discussion: Special Topic Class Project Planning
Feb. 25 Lecture: Abolition, Secession & War Class Project Planning	Feb. 27 Discussion: • Media's Role in Abolition & Secession • Special Topic
March 3 Lecture: Press in the Civil War Class Project Planning	March 5 MIDTERM EXAM Class Project Plan Finalized Book Report 1 Due
SPRING BREAK: March 9-13	
March 17 Lecture: Post-War Mass Press Book Report Presentations	March 19 Discussion: Special Topic
March 24 Lecture: Professional Journalism & The New South Class Project Work Session	March 26 Discussion: • Ethics Templates • Special Topic
March 31 Lecture: Migration, War & Propaganda Class Project Work Session	April 2 Lecture: Magazines & Muckraking Discussion: Propaganda vs. Truth
April 7 Lecture: Radio Rises as War Beckons Class Project Work Session	April 9 Discussion: Special Topic Class Project Materials Due
April 14 Lecture: TV Takes Over Class Project Work Session	April 16 Discussion: Special Topic

April 21 Lecture: News Media & Civil Rights Class Project Work Session	April 23 Special Topic: Covering Civil Rights Class Project Launch
April 28 Lecture: News Media & Vietnam	April 30 Lecture: News Media & Watergate Discussion: Covering Wars Book Report 2 Due
May 5 Discussion: What is the Future of Media History? Book Report Presentations	May 7 END OF TERM EXAM
FINALS WEEK: May 11-15 No Final Exam in SJB 421	