

# SOM 101



## Understanding Media: Content, Ethics, Technology

Fall 2020

Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:45-2:05 p.m.

Jody Richards Hall Auditorium

Dr. Rich Shumate, Assistant Professor

Office: JRH 225

Email: rich.shumate@wku.edu

Office Hours: This semester by Zoom only.

### Digital Interactive Classroom

Our classroom uses digital and interactive resources, including:

- **Blackboard** learning management system to keep up with class activities and submit assignments and quizzes.
- **iClicker** student response system for attendance, class activities.
- **Twitter** for class feedback.

### What You'll Need

#### Textbook

Hanson, R. (2019). *Mass Communication* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE

#### Smart Phone

Bring to every class

#### iClicker app

See instructions on last page

#### Twitter account (free)

#### Laptop or Tablet

For midterm and endterm quizzes

### First Day Access

The required textbook for this class is available through the First Day Access program operated by WKU's bookstore.

This means that you will have access to an e-book version of the textbook automatically; the cost will be billed to your student account unless you opt out. To find the book, go to Course Materials in the left-hand navigation on Blackboard.

The advantage of First Day Access is that you get the textbook and iClicker immediately at a lower price. The textbook costs \$49.00.

You can opt out of First Day and buy this book on your own. However, we are using a new edition of the textbook, so you won't be able to find it used at a discount.

### Purpose

Learn what media are, how they work, how they have evolved, how they impact society, and how they serve diverse and global audiences. Become thoughtful media consumers and improve media literacy. Obtain foundational knowledge to function successfully as media professionals.

### Benchmarks

When you have completed this class, you will be able to:

- Understand what we mean by "media" and "mass communication"
- Learn how "media" communicate "messages"
- Be "media literate"
- Identify the "purposes" of media
- Learn how "media" affect people and "society"
- Appreciate "diversity" in media
- Understand how and why media "evolved" into what we have today
- Appreciate various forms of media, including print, audio, visual, broadcast, and digital
- Recognize why digital forms have been "revolutionary" for modern society
- Know what "convergence" is and how the "Filter Bubble" works
- Understand what "journalism" is and its importance
- Appreciate whether "journalism" and "ethics" are compatible
- Define "fake news" and understand ways the term is used
- Understand what is meant by "freedom of the press"
- Learn about the media fields of "advertising" and "public relations"
- Explore the future of media

### On Learning

- Learning is a journey, not a destination.
- Focus on the journey, not the destination.
- We learn to live. We live to learn.
- Learning makes us better people, not just better students.
- Be goal focused (learning), not performance focused (grades).
- Be curious. Be diligent.
- Ask questions. Make connections.
- Never settle. Rise to every challenge.
- Start each day asking what you'll learn.
- End each day answering what you've learned.
- Remember—an education is more gotten than given.
- What you take from this experience is up to you.

## Keys To Success

**Come to class.** There is no substitute for being here.

**Read the textbook.** This information provides the class foundation.

**Complete assignments on time.** Class work is not optional, and deadlines are important.

**Be professional.** Get in the habit of treating your classes like you would a job.

**Arrive on time.** A lot will happen in the first 10 minutes.

**Participate.** Class and online discussions are your chance to learn, and to shine.

**Be respectful.** Class should be a safe space.

**Contact Dr. Shumate.** If you're stuck, overwhelmed or bewildered, I'm here to help you. I don't bite!

## Class Flow

**Reading Study Questions:** For each reading assignment, you will take a short quiz on Blackboard to measure your comprehension. Questions are due when the reading is due. You can retake each quiz one time to improve your score.

**Unit Discussions:** For each of five units in the class, you will participate in a discussion on Blackboard in which you will answer prompts from Dr. Shumate and respond to each other's posts. The discussion will close at the end of each unit.

**Assignments:** You will complete three to four assignments during the semester, including an assignment during the last week of the semester when class will be held virtually.

**Midterm and Endterm Quizzes:** You will take a quiz in class at the midpoint of the semester and on the last day that class is held in person.

## Grading

Your final grade will be weighted as follows:

- **Discussions and Assignments:** 30 percent
- **Reading Study Questions:** 25 percent (lowest 2 drop)
- **Midterm and Endterm Quizzes:** 30 percent
- **Attendance:** 15 percent (4 absences excused)

## Grading Scale

A= 89.5 or higher

B=79.5 or higher

C=69.5 or higher

D=59.5 or higher

F=Lower than 59.5

## Quizzes

You must attend class on quiz days and take the quiz with the class using your laptop, tablet, or phone. Quizzes are given using Blackboard. Make-up quizzes will only be given if you have an excused absence. Arrive on time – once the first student has left the auditorium, no additional students will be admitted to complete the quiz.

## Dropping Class

The last day to drop this class with a grade of W is Monday, Nov. 2

## Blackboard

As a student, you automatically have access to Blackboard (at [wku.blackboard.edu](http://wku.blackboard.edu)) and are also automatically enrolled in this course. Log in to Blackboard with your NetID and password and navigate to **SOM 101-001 (Fa20): UNDERSTANDING MEDIA**.

If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard, you can enroll in the Blackboard Student User Training by logging into Blackboard and selecting the IT Training tab along the top menu. Next, select **IT: Blackboard Student User Training**

## Seating Chart

Because of coronavirus concerns, students this semester are being asked to set in the same designated seat during each class period. This will help health officials track potential coronavirus exposure. Your compliance with this policy is appreciated.

## Attendance

Regular attendance is necessary for successful completion of SOM 101. Attendance will be taken for each class session using iClicker. Students will check in during the first 10 minutes of class. You must be in the auditorium to check in. If iClicker will not check you in, please contact Dr. Shumate after class to be checked in manually.

Attendance will count 15 percent of your final grade. Students can miss a maximum of six (6) days and will be dropped for non-attendance upon a 7<sup>th</sup> absence. You get four (4) free absences, which means you can miss class up to four times without affecting your grade.

Because of the number of students in this class, these free absences cover both excused and unexcused absences. So there is no need to contact Dr. Shumate if you're going to miss a class unless it is the day of a quiz or you will be out sick for an extended period of time.

## Excused Absences

Students who miss a quiz or an assignment deadline must have an excused absence in order to make it up. Accepted excuses for absences include illness, family emergencies, university activities, jury duty, military obligations, and religious observances. Dr. Shumate 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 allow.

# Policies

## Masks

Out of respect for the health and safety of the WKU community and in adherence with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the University requires that a cloth face covering (reusable or disposable) that covers both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times when in public areas within all buildings. Students must properly wear face coverings while in class regardless of the room size or the nature of the classroom activities. Students who fail to wear a face covering as required will be in violation of the WKU Student Code of Conduct and will be asked to comply or will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University. Accommodations to face coverings must be determined by the Student Accessibility Resource Center and documented before a student may attend class.

## Academic Honesty

**Plagiarism:** To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offence. The academic work of a student must be his or her 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.

**Penalties:** Students who commit an 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.

## Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) at <https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf> and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at <https://www.wku.edu/eoo/titleix/titleixpolicyprocedure2018.pdf>

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.

## 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, 1074. The phone number is 270.745.5004 [270.745.3030 V/TTY] or email at [sarc@wku.edu](mailto:sarc@wku.edu). Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center."

# AEJMC Professional 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 and be able to:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- 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;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

# Class Schedule

Subject to change. Changes will be posted on Blackboard

## Unit 1: Media Foundations

Aug. 25-Sept. 15

Discussion Opens: Tuesday, Aug. 25

Discussion Closes: End of Day Friday, Sept. 18

Textbook Chapters 1, 2, 3, 15

Additional Reading on Diversity

### Benchmarks

What are "media"?

What is "deconstruction"?

What is "communication"?

How do "media" communicate  
"messages"?

What is "mass communication"?

What is "media literacy"?

What is the "purpose" of media?

How do media affect "society"?

What is "diversity"?

Tuesday, 8/25: Introduction to SOM 101

Thursday, 8/27: What is "media" and why do we want to understand it?

Tuesday, 9/1: Introduction to Deconstruction/ Your Place in the Media World

Thursday, 9/3: Communication, Mass Communication and Media Literacy

Ch. 1 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class  
Assignment 1 Due End of Day Friday

Tuesday, 9/8: Media Purpose

Ch. 3 & Ch. 15 (part) & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Thursday, 9/10: Media Effects

Ch. 2 & Study Questions Due Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 9/15: Media Diversity

Diversity Reading & Study Questions Due Beginning of Class (Reading Posted on Blackboard)

## Unit 2: Media Forms

Sept. 17-Oct. 6

Discussion Opens: Thursday, Sept. 17

Discussion Closes: End of Day Friday, Oct. 9

Textbook Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

### Benchmarks

What do we mean by "media evolution"?

What are the different forms of "legacy media"?

Print

- Books

- Newspapers

- Magazines

Electronic

- Audio

- Movies

- TV

Thursday, 9/17: Print Media

Ch. 4 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 9/22: Newspapers

Ch. 6 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Thursday, 9/24: Magazines

Ch. 5 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 9/29: Audio Media

Ch. 7 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Thursday, 10/1: Movies

Ch. 8 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 10/6: Television

Ch. 9 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

**Thursday, Oct. 8:** Midterm Quiz

## Unit 3: Digital Revolution

Oct. 13-Oct. 20

Discussion Opens: Tuesday, Oct. 13

Discussion Closes: End of Day Friday, Oct. 23

Textbook Chapter 10

Additional Readings on Convergence, Filter Bubble

### Benchmarks

Why are digital forms revolutionary for modern society?

What do we mean by "convergence," and what are its implications?

What is the Filter Bubble and how does it work?

Digital Forms

- Social Media
- Video Games

Tuesday, 10/13: Digital Media Revolution & Convergence

Ch. 10 & Convergence Readings & Study Questions  
Due by Beginning of Class

Thursday, 10/15: Filter Bubble

Filter Bubble Reading Due by Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 10/20: Social Media & Video Games

Assignment 2 Due End of Day Friday

## Unit 4: Journalism & A Free Press

Oct. 22-Nov. 5

Discussion Opens: Thursday, Oct. 22

Discussion Closes: End of Day Tuesday, Nov. 17  
(with Unit 5)

Textbook Chapters 13, 14, 15

Additional Readings on Journalism, Fake News

What is "journalism"?

What is "fake news," and how is this term misused?

How is the American press "free," and why is that important?

How are media regulated?

Are "journalism" and "ethics" compatible?

How are media standards different around the world?

Thursday, 10/22: What Is Journalism?

Journalism Reading & Study Questions Due by  
Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 10/27: Fake News

Fake News Reading Due by Beginning of Class

Thursday, 10/29: Press Freedom & Media  
Regulation

Ch. 13 & Study Questions Due by Beginning of Class

Tuesday, 11/3: No Class/Election Day  
**GO VOTE!!!**

Thursday, 11/5: Journalism Ethics/Global Standards

Ch. 14 & 15 (part) Study Questions Due by  
Beginning of Class

## Unit 5: Strategic Communication

Nov. 10-Nov. 12

Discussion Opens: Tuesday, Nov. 10

Discussion Closes: End of Day Tuesday, Nov. 17  
(with Unit 4)

Textbook Chapters 11,12

What is "strategic communication"?

Strategic Communication Fields

- Advertising
- Public Relations
- Public Interest Communications

Tuesday, 11/10: Advertising

Ch. 11 Reading & Study Questions Due by  
Beginning of Class

Thursday, 11/12: Public Relations

Ch. 12 Reading & Study Questions Due by  
Beginning of Class

**Tuesday, Nov. 17:** Endterm Quiz

**Thursday, Nov. 19:** No Class

**Week of Nov. 23-27:** Thanksgiving Break

**Week of Nov. 30-Dec. 4:** Virtual Class, Future of Media, Reading & Assignment TBA

**Finals Week:** No Final in SOM 101

# iClicker Instructions

iClicker is an app used in SOM 101 to take attendance and to participate in polls and activities during class. You can access the app from your phone; it will also work on a laptop, or tablet. (If you don't have access to a phone, laptop, or tablet, contact Dr. Shumate for information on alternative methods of access.)

The cost for iClicker is \$15.99 for a six-month subscription. (Note: If you are using iClicker in other classes, you only need to buy one subscription.) You can either purchase a subscription online with a credit card or buy an access code from the WKU bookstore (ask for ISBN 9781319140175)

## Set Up

- Create your account by either downloading the mobile app or by visiting the iClicker Reef web application website (<https://app.reef-education.com>) and selecting Sign Up!
- Find and select "Western Kentucky University" as your institution.
- Enter your first and last name and WKU email address; for Student ID, use your WKU Net ID (what you use to get into email and Blackboard).
- Create a password for iClicker.
- You will be asked if you want to register an iClicker remote; if you will be using a phone, laptop, or tablet to access iClicker, **decline** and move on to the next step.
- To enroll in this class, find and add this course to your iClicker app: **SOM 101 Understanding Media Fall 2020**
- Once you have created your account, you will receive a two-week free trial; at the end of two weeks, you'll be asked to pay the subscription fee or enter an access code. (Note: If you don't have a way to pay digitally through the app, buy an access code from the bookstore.)

## Using the App

- When you arrive at class, sign in to the app. Attendance will be taken automatically using a geo-locator in the auditorium; you do not need to do anything else.
- If you can't sign in, or iClicker is not recording you as present, start by powering your phone off and restarting. That usually fixes the problem. If you still don't think you've been recorded as present, contact Dr. Shumate **after class** for manual check-in.

## Ignore iClicker Grades/Attendance

iClicker may show grades for class activities. Ignore these; class activities completed on iClicker are not graded. Attendance is tracked on Blackboard, not iClicker, so you should pay attention to your attendance grade on Blackboard.