

Loyola University Chicago
COMM 175-201 Introduction to Communication
Spring 2014
Tu-Thu/11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Corboy Law Center, Room 523

Michael Limón, instructor

Office hours generally two hours before/after class, or by appt.

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Course description

In COMM 175, students will study the important periods in communication history – the oral, written, print, electronic and digital eras. As the course unfolds, it also introduces the theories, practices and behaviors that have driven communication as an art form for thousands of years, including a look at the history of symbolic systems, from Morse code to computer codes. COMM 175 examines not only the central role of storytelling in media and culture but also explores how the media's technological evolution and consolidation are transforming our culture and lives at a pace unseen before.

Course objectives

1. To become more media literate, a more critical consumer of mass media institutions and a more engaged participant

2. To be able to analyze communication theories and apply them to present-day settings
3. To apply critical thinking skills in the research of communication history, with particular focus on how cultural trends influence mass media, even as innovation in the way information is delivered impacts our culture and society.

Required Course Materials:

Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication: 9th edition, Richard Campbell, Christopher S. Martin, Bettina Fabos, Bedford/ St. Martin's

Boxing Plato's Shadow. An Introduction to the Study of Human Communication, 1st ed. Michael Dues & Mary Brown, McGraw- Hill Publishers.

Various handouts from communication books, journals, websites, blogs and newspaper articles will be distributed in class.

Course policies and grading

Students will be expected to know material covered in class discussions and the textbooks, and information from handouts. This knowledge will be measured through writing assignments, five quizzes, a midterm test and final project. The quizzes, dates to be determined, serve as an assessment of your dedication to class readings and a measure of attendance.

You should treat this class as you would a job. You will be expected to display a respectable level of professionalism by attending regularly, arriving on time, being prepared, paying attention during lectures and participating respectfully in discussions. Texting and fiddling with the computer will not be permitted. Frequent absences will result in a lower grade. Showing up on time also is crucial, because a great deal of material will be covered in class discussions. Tardiness will be taken into consideration when determining your final grade. If you're expecting to be absent or late, please call or email me **before** class, the same as if you had a job. Get course notes from a classmate. For illnesses please provide documentation. The success of this class is dependent on student participation and the completion of assignments and readings on the due dates. I do not accept assignments via email without prior approval.

Criteria for written work

A: Publishable work turned in by the deadline (D) with no more than one spelling, punctuation or grammatical (SPG) error. Lengths, content and quality must meet or exceed the assigned guidelines (G). Information must be delivered with clarity (C). Multiple sources and appropriate attribution are required for all work. The work should add meaningfully to a dialogue on the subject at hand and provide for the reader information that is unavailable elsewhere. The opening paragraphs must generate interest in the article and convey important and interesting information. The article must flow, logically, from one subject to the next with an engaging and active voice, maintaining a strict, specific and relevant angle. Quotes must contribute meaningfully to the theme of the work. .

B: Minimal spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors; minimal missing information and sources; minimal problems with the opening paragraphs and organization.

C: Three or more spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors; noticeable missing information and sources; problems with the opening paragraphs and organization.

D: Four or more spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors; significant missing information and sources; significant problems with the opening paragraphs and organization.

F: Misspelling of proper names; other major spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors; almost total lack of information and sources; severe problems with the opening paragraphs and organization.

Criteria for quizzes

Each will be worth 30 points. They be given during class, and students will have approximately 20 minutes to complete them. Quizzes will cover information from the textbooks and class discussion. Make-ups would be dependent on an excused absence.

Spelling and sourcing

Correct spelling and grammar are very important in this class and in life. Your grade is dependent on work with as few errors as possible. Do not rely on spell check. Use a dictionary. Verify any information acquired from the Internet. Wikipedia is not a valid resource.

Total possible points for the semester: 1,000

Quizzes and participation: 200 points (150 and 50)

Midterm: 200

Oral history paper: 300

Final project: 300

Individual assignment grade scale

A: 100-94

A-: 93-90

B+: 89-88

B: 87-83

B-: 82-80

C+ 79-78

C: 77-73

C-: 72-70

D+: 69-68

D: 67-63

D-: 62-60

F: 59-0

Classroom respect

In COMM 175, we will be listening and sharing ideas and thoughts on a range of topics during debates and discussions. Students are expected to exhibit a supportive attitude for each other and an appreciation for diversity in opinions, beliefs and values.

Writing help

If you need additional assistance, please visit the Writing Center:

<http://www.luc.edu/writing/home/>. If your issue is basic English and sentence construction, this resource is fine. If your issue is how to use language and information to tell a news story or to write a paper, come *see me* for more help.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source> .

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

A complete description of the School of Communication Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <http://www.luc.edu/soc/Policy.shtml>

Class schedule (subject to change)

Week 1, Jan. 14 and 16

Assessment test; class exercise; course overview/why this is important; review syllabus

Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 1, *Media and Culture*

Week 2, Jan. 21 and 23

A critical approach to mass communication; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 2 and 3, *Media and Culture*

Week 3, Jan. 28 and 30

The digital landscape, and gaming; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 4 and 5, *Media and Culture*

Week 4, Feb. 4 and 6

Music and sound; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 6 and 7, *Media and Culture*

Week 5, Feb. 11 and 13

Visual power, the impact of TV and movies; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 1-3, *Boxing Plato's Shadow*

ASSIGNMENT: Oral history paper, due March 11, details and handout in class

Week 6, Feb. 18 and 20

The beginnings, and how communication works; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 4 and 5, *Boxing Plato's Shadow*, handouts

Week 7, Feb. 25 and 27

Communication, today and tomorrow; midterm test

Details of finals project, handout in class

Assignment for March 11 and 13: Read Chapters 8 and 9, *Media and Culture*

Week 8, March 4 and 6

Spring break, no class

Week 9, March 11 and 13

ASSIGNMENT due: Oral history

The rise and fall of newspapers and magazines; video mania; breakout groups

Finalizing the finals project

Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 10, *Media and Culture*

Week 10, March 18 and 20

All about books; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapters 11 and 12, *Media and Culture*

Week 11, March 25 and 27

Ad men and mad men (and women); video mania; breakout groups; finals topics due

Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 13, *Media and Culture*

Week 12, April 1 and 3

The economics of it all; video mania; breakout groups

Assignment for next week: Read Chapter 14, *Media and Culture*

Week 13, April 8 and 10

Ethics, anyone?; video mania; breakout groups

ASSIGNMENT: First draft of final due

Assignment for April 22 and 24: Read Chapter 15, *Media and Culture*

Week 14, April 15 and 17

Hand back drafts, answer questions and work on final

Easter holiday, no class on Thursday, 4/17

Week 15, April 22 and 24

Cultural impacts, and work on final

FINALS PROJECT: Due date, no later than 11 a.m., April 29, earlier if complete

Michael Limón is a veteran journalist/editor who has led and been part of award-winning teams at a wide range of top newspapers. Most recently, as business editor at *The Salt Lake Tribune*, the Money section under his supervision was honored with multiple General Excellence awards by the Society of American Business Editors and Writers (SABEW). Previous to that, during more than a decade with the Gannett Co., in roles ranging from assistant managing editor to executive editor, he was twice named a Gannett Newsroom Supervisor of the Year and was honored by The Associated Press, among others.

Limón began his career as a reporter at *The Wichita Eagle* before serving in a variety of editing positions at *The Dallas Morning News* and *The Sacramento Bee*. He is a lifetime member of the

National Association of Hispanic Journalists, a site-team evaluator for the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), and serves on the Board of Visitors for the Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma, his alma mater (BA journalism).

Limón and wife Robbin, who have two grown children, recently relocated to Chicago and live in the West Loop. He is an avid skier who enjoys live music of almost any genre and collects first-edition books.