

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
CANTON, NEW YORK**



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**SOCI 250-SOCIOLOGY OF THE MASS MEDIA**

**Prepared By: Dr. Amani Michael Awwad**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS  
SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT  
May, 2015**



## SOCI 250 SOCIOLOGY OF THE MASS MEDIA

A. **TITLE:** Sociology of the Mass Media

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** SOCI 250

C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3 hours

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** Optional - Liberal Studies

E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Spring.

G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:**  
3 Hours lecture/week

H. **CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:** The course will begin by exploring the component and the basic concepts of mass media. Special emphasis is on the social construction power of the mass media. The positive role of the mass media will be explored as well as the negative impact. The social control function of the mass media will be explained. The course is aimed at providing a critical assessment of the social construction power of the mass media with an emphasis on images, content and context as presented in the mass media. The course will explore the images of various segments of American society as presented in the mass media including racial/ethnic groups, gender and sexual orientation, age and class.

I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-COURSES:** SOCI 101 or instructor's approval.

J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):** By the end of this course, the student will:

<b><i>Course Objective</i></b>	<b><i>Institutional SLO</i></b>
<b>a. Describe the basic components and concepts of mass media.</b>	<b>2. Crit. Thinking 1. Communication</b>
<b>b. Explain and assess the various theories of mass media, coming from Sociology and the Social Sciences. Including basic premise, assumptions and limitations of these theories.</b>	<b>2. Crit. Thinking</b>
<b>c. Examine the role of mass media in constructing appropriate and suitable definitions, as perceived by society, of norms that guide human behavior within the complex arena of gender relations, race and ethnic dynamics, both from macro and micro orientation.</b>	<b>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</b>

K. **TEXTS:** To be determined by the individual instructor. Possible choices can be drawn from the following, but are not, intended to be limited to them, sources listed in the next section-References.

L. **REFERENCES:**

Allan, Stuart. (2004) News Culture. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). McGraw-Hill

Baran, Stanley J. (2014). Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture

(Updated 8<sup>th</sup>, edition) McGraw-Hill.

Barran, Stanley J. (2006). Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture (4<sup>th</sup> Edition.) McGraw-Hill.

Bell, Elizabeth, Haas, Lynch and Sells, Laura (Editors) (1995). From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender, and Culture. Indiana University Press.

Biagi, Shirley (1993). Media/Reader: Perspectives on Mass Media-Industries, Effects, and Issues. Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Bonner, Frances, Goodman, Elizabeth, Allen, Richard, James, Linda and King, Catherine. (1992). Imagining Women: Cultural Representation and Gender. Polity Press.

Butler, Judith. (1997). Excitable speech: A Politics of the Performative. Routledge

C. Canton, Gregg Lee (1998). Empirical Approaches to Sociology: Classic and Contemporary Readings. (Second Edition).

Clover, Carol J. (1992). Men, Women, and Chainsaws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film. Princeton University Press.

Conteau, David and Hoynes, William. (1997). Media/Society: Industries, Images and Audiences. Pine Forge Press.

Dines, Gail and Humez, Jean M. (Editors) (1995). Gender, Race and Class in Media: A text-reader. Sage publications.

Dominick, Joseph R. (2005). Dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the Digital Age. (8<sup>th</sup> Edition.) McGraw-Hill.

Dominick, Joseph R. (2009). The dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in the digital Age. (10<sup>th</sup> edition). McGraw-Hill.

Dominick, Joseph R. (2011). The dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in Transition. (11<sup>th</sup> edition). McGraw-Hill.

Dominick, Joseph R. (2013). The dynamics of Mass Communication: Media in Transition. (12<sup>th</sup>, edition). McGraw-Hill.

Hanson, Janice and Maxey, David J. (Editors) (1999) Sources: Notable Selections in Mass Media (Second Edition). Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.

Hanson, Ralph. (2005). Mass Communication: Living in a Media World. (1<sup>st</sup> Edition). McGraw-Hill.

Harris, Richard Jackson (1994). A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication (Second Edition). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Holeton, Richard (1998). Composing Cyberspace: Identity, Community, and Knowledge in the Electronic Age. McGraw-Hill.

Kolker, Robert (1999). Film, Form, and Culture. McGraw-Hill.

Langer, Sidney (2013). From Slavery to 9/11: Readings in the Sociology and Social Psychology of Extreme Situations. (Edition NO.01). Pearson publication.

Mann, Lornmae Richey and Zatz, Margorie S. (1998). Images of Color, Images of Crime: Readings. Roxbury Publishing Company.

Mulvey, Laura. (1989). Visual and other Pleasures. Indiana University Press.

Rampton, Sheldon and Stauber, John, (2003). Weapons of Mass Deception: The Uses of Propaganda in Bush's War on Iraq. Penguin Press.

Rapping, Elayne. (1994). Mediations: Forays into the Culture and Gender Wars. South End Press.

Rodman, George. (2006). Mass Media in a Changing World: History, Industry, and Controversy (1<sup>st</sup> Edition.) McGraw-Hill.

Rollins, Peter L. and Rollins, Susan W. (Editors) (1995). Gender in Popular Culture: Images of Men and Women in Literature, Visual Media, and Material Culture. Ridgmont Press.

Rutherford, Paul. (2004). Weapons of Mass Persuasion: Marketing the War against Iraq. University of Toronto Press.

Ryan, Michael and Kellna, Douglas. (1988). Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film. Indiana University Press.

Surette, Ray (1992). Media, Crime and Criminal Justice: Images and Realities. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Wekesson, Carol (Editor), (1995). Violence in the Media. Green haven Press.

Whetmore, Edward Jay. (1993). Media America. Media World: Form, Content, and Consequence of Mass Communication (5<sup>th</sup> Edition). Wadsworth Publishing Company.

**M. EQUIPMENT:**

Provide support for the library to purchase the most recent titles in the sociology of the mass media, most importantly, theoretical orientation, application, and research in the mass media.

**N. GRADING METHOD: A - F**

**O. MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

Grade options to be determined by the individual instructor.

For example: examinations, research paper, book reviews, reaction papers, in-class group and individual exercises and discussion. Additionally, journals and portfolios can be used as part of the course.

**P. DETAILED TOPICAL OUTLINE: Attached.**

**Q. LABORATORY OUTLINE: N.A.**

DETAILED OUTLINE  
SOCI 250 SOCIOLOGY OF MASS MEDIA

TOPICS

I. What is Mass Media? Components and Basic Concepts

- A. Definition of Mass Media
- B. Components of Mass Media
- C. Basic Concepts

II. Theoretical Perspectives on the Mass Media

- A. The Sociological Paradigm and the Mass Media
  - 1. The structural functional paradigm
  - 2. The social conflict paradigm
  - 3. The symbolic interactionist paradigm
- B. Selected Theories of the Mass Media
  - 1. Social Learning Theory--observational learning, Modeling Theory: the issue of media violence
  - 2. Cultivation Theory: extensive exposure to media television
  - 3. Socialization Theory and prolonged exposure to media
  - 4. Agenda setting and audience orientation
  - 5. Uses and Gratification Theory: the role of the active audience
  - 6. Schematic Theory and information processing

III. Functions of the Mass Media and Audience Orientation

- A. Functions of Mass Media
  - 1. Manifest vs. latent functions
  - 2. The mass media as an agent of social control: dysfunctional mass media
- B. Audience Orientation of the Mass Media
  - 1. Active vs. passive audience
  - 2. The ideological impact/consequences of active audience and the passive audience

#### IV. Social Constructionism and the Mass Media

##### A. Theoretical Bases

##### B. The Social/Historical Context

1. The intended message
2. The targeted audience
3. Content analysis
4. Contextual analysis

##### C. Symbolic and General Impact/Consequences

1. Negative impact and stigmatization
2. The media as an agent of propaganda
3. The role of the media in creating appropriate labels and/or images

#### V. Minorities in the Mass Media: The Case for Racism, Discrimination, and Exaggerated Stereotypes of Various Minority Groups

##### A. The Four Stages of Minority Portrayals:

1. Non-recognition
2. Ridicule
3. Regulation
4. Respect

##### B. Racial/Ethnic Minorities and the Mass Media: A Sample of Stereotypes, Racism, and Discrimination

1. African Americans
2. Hispanic Americans
3. Native Americans
4. Jewish Americans
5. Arab Americans
6. Asian Americans

##### C. Gender and Sexual Orientation

1. Femininity and masculinity within the genre of horror movies and action movies
2. Femininity and masculinity within the genre of early Western movies
3. Femininity and masculinity within the genre of the soap opera, romance novels, and the advertising and music industry
4. The gay and lesbian agenda and the mass media

##### D. Other minority groups

1. The elderly and the mass media
2. Classism in the mass media
3. The physically challenged and the mass media

## VI. Ideological Wars in the Mass Media: Constitutional Challenges

### A. Constitutional Debates and the Mass Media

1. Freedom of speech vs. censorship
2. Legal implications of the First Amendment
3. Whose freedom of speech is protected and whose message is censored: ideological implications and consequences

### B. Winners and losers in the ideological warfare's in the mass media: a sample

1. The rating game
2. Violence in the media
3. Pornography
4. Sex education and the mass media
5. Hate speech
6. Rap music







