**BCMN 4320**

**Current Issues in Telecommunications**

The University of Texas at Arlington

Fall 2014

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**Office Hours:** Mon. & Wed. 9 to 10 a.m. and by appointment

**Meeting Times**: MWF 11 to 11:50 a.m.

**Course Description**

This course focuses on recent developments and current literature in telecommunications, satellite distribution, and national and international telecommunications policies. Current problems and possible solutions are presented.

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of current issues in telecommunications.

2. Students will research and present findings on the current state of mass communications.

3. Students will learn the social norms o the telecommunications field from media professionals.

4. Students will demonstrate they can think critically, creatively and independently about present and future media distribution channels.

**Required Text & Materials**

There is no paper text. Readings will be provided by the instructor and will by primarily electronic files and from the web.

**Descriptions of major assignments and examinations:** In addition to regular reading and writing assignments, the course requirements will include the following major components:

1. A midterm exam which will cover readings and class lectures over the first half of the semester.
2. A final exam which covers readings, lectures and class presentations during the whole semester.
3. An individual presentation on a course-related topic
4. A group presentation on a course-related topic

**Attendance:** At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students’ academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. For this class, participation is worth 10% of your total course grade and therefore attendance is recorded. If you have scheduling conflicts which will keep you from being here it will negatively impact your grade. I don’t need to hear about why you are missing class unless 1) it’s for a religious holiday (must alert me in advance) 2) a medical problem (please alert me before class via email and have documentation later) or 3) it’s for another University event that allows for absences. Regular class attendance is necessary to keep up with assigned readings, lectures, and assignments. Excessive lateness will also result in lower grades. Lateness is disruptive to the entire class. Please come on time.

**Grading:**

The course contains these elements and weights:

Reading responses: 20%

Exams: 30%

Presentations: 30%

Participation: 20%

Grade Scale:

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

Below 60: F

**Extra Credit:** Will be offered at professor’s discretion. Details will be announced during class.

**Expectations for Out-of-Class Study**: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

**Make-up Exams**: Make sure you don’t miss exams as I rarely allow make-ups and only in extenuating circumstances.

**Grade Grievances**: Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current undergraduate catalog: <http://wweb.uta.edu/catalog/content/general/academic_regulations.aspx#10>

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering.

**Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law “Title IX” such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Academic Integrity:** All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Student Support Services**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is the stairwell located immediately outside the classroom door. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**Writing Center.** **:** The Writing Center, 411 Central Library, offers individual 40 minute sessions to review assignments, *Quick Hits* (5-10 minute quick answers to questions), and workshops on grammar and specific writing projects. Visit [https://uta.mywconline.com/](https://owa.uta.edu/owa/luket@exchange.uta.edu/redir.aspx?C=jqplelmmw0KcvkWv1pRv_rHS8ofUUtFIXl_CWZTLffEmCPyZf3x4ncUbBmD9p3gSPROCbhSJj7U.&URL=https%3a%2f%2futa.mywconline.com%2f) to register and make appointments. For hours, information about the writing workshops we offer, scheduling a classroom visit, and descriptions of the services we offer undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty members, please visit our website at [www.uta.edu/owl/](http://www.uta.edu/owl/).

**Course Schedule (subject to change):**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Dates* | *Reading to do before class* |
| Week 1 | **August 22**  Course introduction, syllabus reviewed |  |
| Week 2 | **August 25, 27 & 29 – Broadcast Biz in 2014**  The first two weeks will focus on the state of the broadcast industry in 2014.  Mon**:** State of Broadcast News  Wed: Broadcast Salaries & News Sharing  Friday: Broadcasting & Web & social media | Mon: 1. [Broadcast News](http://www.rtdna.org/article/tv_news_staff_numbers_slip#.U_YX_cW2h8E);  Wed: 1. [Broadcast Salaries](http://www.rtdna.org/article/tv_salaries_barely_outpace_inflation_radio_behind) 2. [Shared content agreements](http://www.rtdna.org/article/newsgathering_sharing_agreements_evolve)  Fri: 1. [Web](http://www.rtdna.org/article/what_s_new_online_for_radio_and_tv)  2. [Social Media](http://www.rtdna.org/article/radio_and_tv_grow_social_mobile) |
| Week 3 | **September 3 & 5 – Broadcast Biz in 2014**  Mon: No class, Labor Day  Wed: Broadcast salaries and women and minorities in broadcasting  Fri: Other players in the broadcasting business | Wed: [Women & Minorities](http://www.rtdna.org/article/women_minorities_make_newsroom_gains)  Fri: Individual research idea DUE (two paragraphs). |
| Week 4 | **September 8, 10 & 12 – The Future of Broadcasting**  Mon. and Wed.: Future of Broadcasting  Friday: GUEST SPEAKER: Jane Slater, CBS 11 | Mon: [Broadcasting Future](http://www.rtdna.org/article/how_broadcasters_and_news_directors_see_the_future) |
| Week 5 | **September 15, 17 & 19 – Aerial Journalism and Drone Technology and Technologies of Tomorrow**  **Online Gaming Industry** | [Reading 1](http://www.salon.com/2012/04/10/the_drones_are_coming_to_america/)  [Reading 2](http://www.suasnews.com/2012/01/11389/dallas-meat-packing-plant-investigated-after-drone-images-reveal-pollution/)  [Reading 3](http://windowsitpro.com/windows/video-game-market-continues-its-downward-spiral)  [Reading 4](http://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2013-03-21-smartphones-now-seen-as-equal-to-consoles-as-preferred-gaming-platform-survey) |
| Week 6 | **September 22, 24 & 26**  Mon & Wed: Partisan Media; Broadcasting and Politics  Friday: Presentation Work Day | [Reading 1](http://themonkeycage.org/2013/03/10/can-partisan-media-contribute-to-healthy-politics/) |
| Week 7-10 | **September 29 – October 24**  During these four weeks students will present the results of their individual research projects. Topics will include but are not limited to these: sports broadcasting, social media and broadcasting, women in broadcasting, minorities in broadcasting, Spanish-language broadcasting, documentary and film, news broadcasting, YouTube, tablet-based telecommunication, smart phones, local television news, podcasting, etc.  **NOTE: COMM DAY ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED ON WED. OCT. 22 (no class meeting that day)** | (Students will provide readings) |
| Week 10  (Comm Day this week!) | **October 27, 29 & 31**  Mon: MIDTERM EXAM REVIEW  Wed: MIDTERM EXAM  Thurs: Comm. Day (extra credit offered)  Friday: Group project work day |  |
| Week  11 | **November 3, 5 & 7**  Mon: Exam results  Wed & Fri: Current Events in Broadcasting |  |
| Week  12& 13 | **November 10 – Nov 21**  During these 2 weeks students will present the results of their group research projects. Topics will include but are not limited to these: sports broadcast, social media and broadcasting, women in broadcasting, minorities in broadcasting, Spanish-language broadcasting, documentary and film, news broadcasting, Youtube, tablet-based telecommunication, smart phones, local television news, etc. | (students will provide readings) |
| Week  14 | **November 24 & 26**  Mon: Final group presentations  Wed: Final exam self-study  Fri: No class – Thanksgiving break |  |
| Week  15 | **December 1 & 3**  Mon & Wed: Exam Review  Dec. 10 at 11 a.m. : FINAL EXAM |  |