



**Journalism 101:  
Media and Society  
Spring 2016**

**Mondays, Wednesdays  
3:00 – 4:15 p.m.  
3139 Wescoe**

**Required Textbook:  
Baran, S. J. (2015). *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture*, Updated 8<sup>th</sup> ed., New York: McGraw Hill.**

**J101 Blackboard site: <http://courseware.ku.edu>**

## **How do the media dominate your life?**

Barack Obama. Donald Trump. Caitlyn Jenner. Queen Bey. Channing Tatum. Peyton Manning. Amy Schumer. Kerry Washington. James Bay. Wiz Khalifa. JLo, JLaw, LeBron, Ellen, Oprah, Hillary, Katy, Taylor, the Real (but oh-so-fake) Housewives.

Chances are you recognize many of these names. And chances are you know some (or maybe many) details about the lives of these people. You may know more about them than you do some of your own friends or family. You may not know these people personally, but you know them through the media. In our class, we're going to talk about the power of the media and the media's effects on our everyday lives and if (how?) the media influence our values and viewpoints.

Welcome to Journalism 101, a course about media, society, and culture. In this course, we're going to explore how the media shape our world and how we interact with media.

We use mass media every day for information and entertainment—we use mass media so much, it's hard to imagine what even one day would be like without the stories, photographs, songs, advertisements, and news we get from books, television, mobile phones, radio, tablets, and the Internet. Because media are so much a part of our lives, we don't often stop to really think about the images we see, the messages we hear, or the information we receive. That's the purpose of this course—to help us think about media information and influences.

## **What you'll learn in J101**

In this course, we will:

- Think critically and analyze the media messages we see and hear;
- Consider how mass media shape our personal views, ideas, and perspectives, as well as how media shape our culture;
- Discuss the history of mass media to understand how the media landscape has changed and continues to evolve;
- Think about the relationship between media and audiences and learn how media work to meet the needs of diverse audiences;
- Understand better how the First Amendment affects the media messages we transmit and receive;
- Emphasize ethics;
- Learn how technology affects access to knowledge and information around the globe;
- Learn about careers in the media;
- Think about the relationship between media and economics—how media are financed, who owns the media, and how ownership affects the information we get.

All of us are media consumers, and some of you are taking this class because you want to be media producers. One of the goals of this course is to help you think critically about media messages. Remember, thinking critically doesn't mean thinking negatively. It means thinking carefully.

### **How you'll learn in a large class**

Look around you. There are gobs of students in this class. Learning in a large class can be difficult—it is easy to feel lost and get distracted, and it can be intimidating to ask questions or voice your opinions. So, as the teachers, we will try to do several things to make this feel like a smaller class and to make you feel more comfortable and less anonymous.

- First, think of the classroom as a lab, where you'll interact, discuss, and learn. We will have lectures, but there will be plenty of time for you to talk and to ask questions. The best way for you to learn is to be involved. You're in charge of your learning. You have the power.
- Since we can't meet with each of you as we'd like to, we'll send frequent e-mails to follow up on in-class discussions, to alert you to articles or programs about the media, or to just keep in touch. You should feel free to email us, too.
- Talk to us. We will be happy to meet with you individually to discuss your ideas and concerns. You can stop by during office hours or make an appointment.

While our responsibility as teachers is to create an environment where you can learn, you have some responsibilities as a student. You want to:

- Come to class every day.
- Come to class prepared to learn.
- Listen and ask questions.
- Complete assignments on time.
- Inform us of any problems that interfere with your learning.
- Listen respectfully to what others have to say.
- Express your ideas and opinions in a constructive way.
- Keep an open mind.

### **What textbook you'll need**

Our textbook is: Baran, S. J. (2015). *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture*. Updated 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw Hill.

There are several ways to obtain your textbook. You can purchase or rent the book from the KU bookstore. The Web site is: [www.kubookstore.com](http://www.kubookstore.com). Click on the textbook tab, then the "online shopping" link, then Spring 2016.

Then you will be asked for the course department (journalism) and the course number (101). Also, you can buy the book from Amazon or another independent bookseller.

Additionally, you can buy or rent the book online from the publisher. You will want to log on to: [www.coursesmart.com](http://www.coursesmart.com). You will need to create an account.

[http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/1417977/0077507975?\\_hdv=6.8](http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/1417977/0077507975?_hdv=6.8)

When you purchase the book online, be sure to buy the “updated 8<sup>th</sup> edition” published in 2015. There are other editions from the past. You want to get the most current edition.

We will put a hard copy of the book in Resource Center, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Stauffer-Flint Hall.

### **How you’ll earn your grades**

Most students are concerned about grades and how they can do well in their courses. In J101, your grades will be based on your performance on three exams and the completion of one blog entry.

The exams will cover the assigned readings for the course, as well as any guest speakers and discussions we have in class, so take notes carefully. The notes will be your study guide.

Here are the exam dates:

Exam 1: Feb. 24

Exam 2: March 28

Exam 3: Tuesday, May 10 This is our final exam. It starts at 1:30 p.m. The university sets the time for this exam, so we can’t change it. You need to plan to be here. This exam is not cumulative—it will cover material from March 30 through the end of the semester.

Everyone will take the exams, including the final exam, at the same time on the same day. **No make-up tests will be given**, so you need to make plans to be in class and on time. The only exceptions for these exam dates will be for students who are required to attend or participate in official university-sponsored events or students who are ill. If you’re attending a school-sponsored event, you need to bring a note from the university before the exam. If you are ill, you need to let me know in advance that you’ll miss the exam, and you need to bring a note from your doctor. Wedding rehearsals, surprise plane tickets from parents, parties, job interviews, court appearances, jail time, job conflicts, tickets to sporting events (even championships), and early vacations are not valid reasons for missing tests or taking them early.

**Don’t even ask.**

In addition to your exams, you'll complete one blog entry, and you'll post it on the course Blackboard site. The blog should be your original work (no one else's), and it should be original to this class. Don't recycle an assignment from another class or from high school. If you do, you'll receive a 0 for the assignment.

**Here are the directions:**

Media feast blog. You will go outside your usual circle of reading and viewing material and use/watch/read three media you wouldn't ordinarily seek out. Then you will write about your experiences.

Plan to write three to five paragraphs about your experience and post your blog entry on the course Blackboard site. This blog entry should be posted by 5 p.m. April 6.

Detailed directions are on the course Blackboard site. READ THEM. FOLLOW THEM.

With the blog assignment, you'll receive an A (100 points) if you did the assignment correctly and thoroughly. You'll receive a C (70) if you did the minimum work required. You'll receive a 0 if you don't turn in the assignment on time.

**Here's how we will evaluate your media blog post:**

A – The blog entry is clearly written and organized. It shows careful thought and analysis. It answers the questions outlined for the assignment directions. It shows creativity and originality. Anyone reading this blog would find it informative and entertaining. There are no grammar and spelling mistakes. Work is posted on time.

C – The blog entry is posted on time, but it is not well-organized or well-written. The blog entry did not adequately answer the questions in the assignment. There are numerous spelling and grammar errors. There wasn't much effort put into the assignment; the student did the minimum required and nothing more. Anyone reading this blog would find it boring and uninformative.

F or 0 – The student did not turn in the work on time or did not present original work.

It can take up to two to three weeks to read all of these entries and record your grades, so be patient.

Here's how all your grades will be calculated for this class:

Media feast blog—10 percent of your final grade.

Exam 1—25 percent of your final grade.

Exam 2—30 percent of your final grade.

Exam 3—35 percent of your final grade.

### How we'll report your grades

The purpose of grades is to give you feedback on your progress in the class. Remember, grades are earned, not given. There's research that suggests a correlation between class attendance and good grades. Bottom line? Attend class if you want to do well in the course. No one monitors attendance, but we will learn who you are and notice when you're not in class. You're an adult, and the decision to get good grades is up to you.

We will make every effort to keep an accurate record of your grades and to post your test scores quickly. A computer scores the test; usually it takes the testing center about 48 hours to return the test scores to us.

We'll post all grades on the course Blackboard site (only you can see your grade), and the computer will calculate your final grade for you.

Although you will receive numerical grades on your blog and exams, your final grade for this class will be a letter grade. Here is how the numbers translate:

93 – 100 = A	90 – 92 = A-
87 – 89 = B+	83 – 86 = B
80 – 82 = B-	77 – 79 = C+
73 – 76 = C	70 – 72 = C-
67 – 69 = D+	63 – 66 = D
60 – 62 = D-	59 or below = F

Students often ask questions about “rounding up” grades—that is, if the final grade contains a fraction, students want to know what happens. If you earn a final grade with a fraction of .5 or above, your final grade will be rounded up to the higher number. If you earn a final grade with a fraction of .4 or below, your grade stays the same. For example, if your final grade is 89.7, it will be rounded up to a 90 or an A-. If your final grade is an 89.4, the grade will remain an 89, and you'll earn a B+. **We don't grade on a curve.**

If a grade is posted incorrectly—it sometimes happens in a class this large—or if a grade isn't recorded, let us know as soon as possible. Don't wait until the end of the semester. Definitely don't wait until the final grades have been posted, and everyone has gone home for break.

### **A word about the ‘rents**

This is college and your grades are your responsibility. You – not your parents – need to take care of business in this class. Should you not get the grades you want, we suggest using the following checklist:

- 1) Do you show up for class, awake, alert and ready to learn?
- 2) Do you pay attention in class? (Not texting, trolling social media, etc.?)
- 3) Do you take notes? You know, real, comprehensible notes?
- 4) Do you study for several hours a week (at least) outside of class?
- 5) Do you take time and care on the assignments and submit them on time?
- 6) Do you work ahead in class; not waiting until the last minute to do assignments or ask for assistance?

We will be happy to talk with you about your performance in class and the class material; make no mistake about that. We’re friendly and approachable. If your grades aren’t what you think they ought to be, we’ll run through the checklist with you.

BUT – we don’t have parent-teacher conferences. Please do not have your parents call or write us. We will not talk with them concerning your performance or grades in the class, with or without your permission. Please see either one of us during the first week of class if you have any questions about your parents’ role – or lack thereof – in J101.

### **How you’ll get extra credit**

During the semester, you may have several opportunities to earn extra credit.

One way that you can earn extra credit is by completing online surveys. We’ll announce these surveys in class, and we’ll post information about them on Blackboard.

These surveys will help the journalism school learn more about students. This isn’t a test. We are just trying to get information about students who may decide to major in journalism so that we can be better teachers.

There also may be other chances to earn extra credit by completing surveys conducted by graduate students working on their master’s or doctoral projects or by attending speeches. Those will be announced in class, too.

You aren’t required to participate in any of these surveys or attend any speeches. This is simply a chance to help boost your grade.

## Who'll lead the class

The teaching team is:

Tom Volek  
Associate Dean  
200D Stauffer Flint Hall  
864-7622  
[Jour101@ku.edu](mailto:Jour101@ku.edu)

Kerry Benson  
Strategic Communication Chair  
209C Stauffer Flint Hall  
864-7632  
[Jour101@ku.edu](mailto:Jour101@ku.edu)

Feel free to contact us if you have questions or problems. Our job is to help you, so don't be shy.

The best way to contact us is by e-mail.

You can also visit your professors during their office hours or make an appointment:

KB office hours: Mondays 2:15 – 2:45 p.m./Wednesdays 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

TV office hours: Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. /Wednesdays, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

## How you'll demonstrate professional behavior

Most of you are going to college because you want to get a good job. In the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, we want to prepare you as well as we can. That's why in all your journalism classes there is an emphasis on professional behavior.

Professional behavior means that your actions in the classroom mirror your actions in the workplace. In journalism classes, you're expected to be here every day, to show up on time, and to be an active participant in the class.

As the teachers, our responsibility is to create an environment for students who want to learn. Therefore, please help by making this class go as smoothly as possible.

- Make every effort to attend class each day. Any materials from the class—including discussions, comments from guest speakers, and audio- and videotapes—may be included on the exam. If you can't make it to class, you don't need to tell me, but you do need to talk with a fellow student about what you missed.
- Please be here on time. Don't disrupt the class by wandering in late or leaving early.



- Turn off your cell phones before you come to class. Two-hundred ringing cell phones will disrupt the class, so check your phone messages before the class begins.
- Do not send text messages while we're in class. Do not check for text messages while we're in class. Do not send photos by phone during class time. Don't tweet. Don't chat your snap. Don't use Facebook, Instagram—you get the idea.
- If you need to have a personal conversation with someone, please wait until the end of class. Please respect your fellow students.
- Now that you're in college, you're trying to balance school with a job and a social life. It's a lot of pressure, and it can be exhausting. We sympathize with the demands on your time—we were students, too. However, when you come to class, we expect you to be alert and attentive. We expect you to be here the entire time.
- You cannot be two places at once. If you have a job that conflicts with class, we need to talk. Don't leave class early to get to your job.
- Do not use class time for naps. Seriously, find a bed – or at least a sofa.
- Please don't work on other assignments while you're in this class. You may think it's multi-tasking, but we consider it rude. (Only because it is.)
- Don't do crossword puzzles or sudoku in class. If you are interested in words and numbers, we can help you find a KU course that will satisfy that interest.

### **How you can seriously blow your grade: Plagiarism and fabrication**

In this class, and in all journalism classes, honesty and integrity are critical. Any work you do must be original and reflect your own ideas, thoughts, and research. In a work setting, if you choose to violate professional standards, you will be fired. In this class, if you choose to violate the standards for academic integrity, you'll fail the course, and you may be expelled from or denied admission to the School of Journalism.

Here is the journalism school's official policy statement:

“The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

“In this course, the penalty for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification is a failing grade for the semester. Additional penalties can include expulsion from the School of Journalism. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of this course.”

The KU University Senate defines plagiarism as “knowingly presenting the work of another as one’s own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.” The University defines fabrication and falsification as “unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.”

Here’s some clarification:

- If you use or attempt to use any unauthorized materials during a test, or if you give any unauthorized materials to someone else during a test, this is cheating. Unauthorized materials include written materials, such as notes. Unauthorized materials include any forms of nonverbal communication (one cough, the answer is A; two coughs, the answer is B, etc.).
- Plagiarism is stealing. You take someone else’s ideas, thoughts, or words, and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it was your own in the course blog is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person’s ideas, opinions, and words into the blogs you write to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due.
- Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up. This can include making up an entire interview or embellishing a fact, quote, or statistic in the blog to make it sound better. Don’t do it.

We will discuss these issues further in class. If you have any questions, contact the professors or teaching assistant.

Here’s our official policy statement: **Don’t cheat.**

### **Where you’ll find course materials**

We will use the course electronic Blackboard site to keep you up-to-date on class activities. We’ll post a copy of the syllabus and class reading assignments on Blackboard, and we’ll post grades there as well. The class PowerPoint slides will be posted there for two weeks, then removed. You can find contact information for the teaching team on Blackboard. You can upload your blog assignment to this site. From time to time, we may post news articles or links to articles that class members think are interesting. If you have an article, video, or idea you’d like to share, you can send it to us, and we’ll post it on Blackboard. Please let us know immediately if you have problems accessing this site: <http://courseware.ku.edu>.

### Where to go if you have special learning needs

If you have a problem or concern that may affect your learning, contact one of us as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Student Access Services coordinates accommodations for all students who are eligible, but you must provide documentation.

If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted Student Access Services, please do so immediately. Information about services can be found at: <http://access.ku.edu>.

The email is: [achieve@ku.edu](mailto:achieve@ku.edu). The phone number is (785) 864-4064. Access Services is located in Room 22, Strong Hall.

### What you'll read so you're ready for discussions

To get the most out of this course, you'll want to read the assignments listed below before you come to class. Reading these materials will help you participate in class discussions. Also, the exams will include materials from the readings, even if we have not discussed the readings in class.

This is a tentative reading list. We may spend more or less time on a topic, depending on class interest. Please check your e-mails for updates.

Date	Class topic	You should read this assignment BEFORE you come to class.
<b><i>The ABCs of mass communication</i></b>		
Jan. 20	Introduction to the class	
Jan. 25	Mass communication: Why should I care?	Chapter 1, pp. 4-21.
Jan. 27	The media landscape—for now	Chapter 1, pp. 31-41.
Feb. 1	The media made me do it	Chapter 13, pp. 322-339.
Feb. 3	Do the media affect my morals?	Chapter 13, pp. 339-346.
<b><i>Media evolutions and revolutions</i></b>		
Feb. 8	Just how free is my speech?	Chapter 14, pp. 354-361.
Feb. 10	The free press vs. the responsible press	Chapter 14: pp. 361-366.
Feb. 15	Media ethics: An oxymoron?	Chapter 14, pp. 366-378.
Feb. 17	Books: “It was a pleasure to burn”	Chapter 3, pp. 49-57.
Feb. 22	I know it’s only rock ‘n’ roll, but I like it... What’s good?	Chapter 7, pp. 166-167. “Using Media to Make a Difference.”

Feb. 24		Exam 1
Feb. 29	Yikes. What's the deal with newspapers?	Chapter 4, pp. 73-91.
March 2	Magazines: From elites to niches	Chapter 5, pp. 100-108.
March 7	Magazines: What's my type?	Chapter 5, pp. 108-118.
March 9	Film: Hooray for Hollywood	Chapter 6, pp. 124-134.
March 14 and 16	Spring break	Do the right thing, people.
March 21	Film: Lights, camera, blockbuster	Chapter 6, pp. 134-147.
March 23	It hurts when I laugh: Media and satire	Readings on Blackboard.
March 28		Exam 2
March 30	Television: I laughed, I cried—and that was just the commercial	Chapter 8, pp. 183-191.
April 4	Television: Tune in, turn on, turn off?	Chapter 8, pp. 195-206.
April 6	We have no secrets: The Internet, me, and 7 billion of my closest friends...	Chapter 10, pp. 233-243. Blog due.
April 11	Virtually everything is virtual: More on the Internet	Chapter 10, pp. 243–259.
April 13	Going global: It takes a village to make media	Chapter 15, pp. 384-395; 397-399.
<b><i>Creativity on the job</i></b>		
April 18	Photojournalism: Every picture tells a story	Readings posted on Blackboard.
April 20	The spin cycle: The public in public relations	Chapter 11, pp. 266-273.
April 25	PR: You mean I can get paid to do this?	Chapter 11, pp. 273-283.
April 27	Buy, buy, baby, buy, buy: Advertising	Chapter 12, pp. 289-296.
May 2	Money can't buy me love—I think: More on ads	Chapter 12, pp. 296-311.
May 4	Review - TBD	
May 10	Exam 3	Exam begins at 1:30.

This course, syllabus and contents borrow heavily from the work of Prof. Barbara Barnett (B-squared) and Prof. Chuck Marsh. Blame them – or give them a cookie.