

**Murray State University**  
**Department: Journalism & Mass Communications**  
Course Number: JMC 330      Credit Hours: 3

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**I. Title:** JMC 330, *Mass Media Effects*

**II. Catalog Description:**

A systematic approach to the structure, function and design of modern mass media theory and effects, to include the areas of perception, ethics, persuasion, violence, erotica, political socialization, learning theory, uses and gratifications, and agenda-setting.

*-- Prerequisites include successful completion of JMC 168, sophomore or higher standing, or consent of the instructor.*

**III. Purpose :** To acquaint the student with the basic models, concepts, principles, and effects of the mass media. Emphasis will be on a scientific, empirical approach.

**IV. Course Objectives:** By acquainting students with the basic concepts, principles and effects of mass media, students will gain an appreciation of the social science method, as well as an awareness of the impact of mass media in the field of communications. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to:

- Appreciate the significance of the scientific method and empirical investigation of social issues and problems involving mass media;
- Appreciate the importance of ethics in mass communication;
- Have a better understanding of the impact of media violence and sexuality upon society;
- Know various strategies of persuasion and their effects;
- Be familiar with key studies and research findings regarding various media-effects subject categories.

**V. Content Outline:** The goals of social science and the scientific method; a brief history of media studies; the potential impact of exposure to mass media, as in the areas of violence and erotica, as well as upon the human socialization in general; methods of persuasion and attitude change; media ethics and the

nature of judgments made by media practitioners; the political process and mass communication; the role of media in creating and perpetuating stereotypes.

**VI. Instructional Activities:** Lecture, discussion and readings.

**VII. Field, Clinical and / or Laboratory Experiences:** N / A

**VIII. Resources:** One textbooks (see XII), as well as Internet exploration and discussion of modern mass media.

**IX. Grading Procedure:** A total of 1,000 points may be garnered through successful completion of course components. The scale is:

900 - 1,000 = "A"

800 - 899 = "B"

700 - 799 = "C"

600 - 699 = "D"

Below 600 = "E"

Four tests, two of which will count for 200 points each; a mid-term and a final exam which will count for 300 points each.

**X. JMC Department Attendance Policy:** Your regular attendance is required. Just as punctuality and presence would be expected on a professional job, you are expected to fulfill all obligations herein stated by deadlines and on time. A legitimate reason for excuses should be brought to the instructor's attention by **notifying him ahead of time**, just as you would notify a professional employer.

Missed exams -- Exams missed because of an *excused* absence may be made up, but work missed because of an *unexcused* absence may not be made up. Thus, unexcused absences will negatively affect a student's final grade.

**Excused absences fall into two broad categories:**

**1. Absence due to personal illness or death in the immediate family or other extraordinary personal circumstance. Faculty may require appropriate authentication or documentation.**

**2. Absence due to student participation in a university sanctioned event in which the student serves as a representative of the institution.**

**FUNDAMENTALLY, student absences or significant latenesses from more than three class periods will likely result in lowering of the final course letter grade.**

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**XI. Academic Honesty:** Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person's material as one's own), or doing work for another person who will receive academic credit for it are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notes, or other sources in order to help oneself or classmates during examinations; the unauthorized copying of exams, assignments, or term papers; or the submission of unacknowledged material as if it were the student's own work. Abridgement of the groundrules of testing (mainly, that all answers are your own) is not allowed.

**XII. Text and References:**

*Media Effects Research: A Basic Overview*, 2nd Ed. by Glenn G. Sparks. Wadsworth, 2006.

**XIII. Course Prerequisites:**

- Must be of sophomore or higher-level standing;
  - Must have completed JMC 168 or a similar course in modern mass media;
  - Must be, to some extent, a consumer of common mass media;
  - Must be able to take in-classroom tests, to include the ability to write long-hand essays. *Allowances for disabilities can be handled through the instructor, and must be documented.*
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