

Murray State University
Department: Journalism & Mass Communications
Course Number: JMC 390 Credit Hours: 3

I. **Title:** JMC 390, *The World Wide Web as Mass Medium*

II. Catalog Description:

The course is designed:

- 1) To enhance the student's effectiveness as a user of Internet technologies;
- 2) To build understanding of the social implications of, and the major issues surrounding, the popularization of the World Wide Web; and
- 3) To focus on the Web's functions as a provider of news and information. Also considered are key technical concepts integral to Web operations as they apply to the fields of journalism, electronic media, advertising and public relations.

These sections begin *the **first day of classes*** and run a full semesterly schedule.

The course may be largely online, and it requires regular Web access. Prerequisites: Junior or senior standing; acquaintanceship with personal computing and Internet browser software; and access to the Internet. Open to non-majors.

-- Prereqs include successful completion of JMC 168, or consent of the instructor.

III. Purpose : The course is designed to identify and explore the influence of the World Wide Web upon American and global cultures. As the world's newest "mass medium," the Web will be viewed as a force in communications, entertainment, and personal exchange. Although not a course in "web site design," students will become familiar with web authoring principles through construction of materials for potential actual use.

IV. Course Objectives: To gain an appreciation of the terminology and sociology of the World Wide Web, promoting facility in Web use for information retrieval and for personal exchange; To examine both the opportunities and challenges presented to mass communicators by the emerging technology of the Internet, especially the Web; To understand major facets of the Web as a cultural entity, such as its parameters of citizenship and political discourse; To gain insight into major issues affecting the Internet as a mass medium, such as privacy and censorship; and To explore the outreach strategies of traditional mass media in the realm of cyberspace, such as online publishing, "webcasting," and venues of advertising and public relations.

V. Content Outline: Investigations of Internet terminology; uses of e-mail; electronic commerce; search engines and research strategies as they affect mass communicators; online advertising, journalism, public relations and broadcasting; issues of online privacy, censorship and source credibility; and a primer on Web page components. As one of the texts advises: "... about how the Internet works in general, and how it works for mass communications professionals in particular."

VI. Instructional Activities: On-line notes and "lecture"; student use of online discussion forums and hypertext links; use of the New York Times Technology listserve; textbook readings.

VII. Field, Clinical and / or Laboratory Experiences:
The course will meet certain Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This web-learning portion of the course is generally "asynchronous," and that work can be completed off-site or off-campus.

All work **is due when noted** in the attached schedule, but some can be completed according to your own availability week-by-week.

VIII. Resources: Two textbooks (see XII), as well as the Internet, including a listserve subscription to the ***New York Times Technology Section***. (Note: You would have to subscribe to the Times online. It's free).

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"

There will be three quizzes; one HTML page that you author in some fashion; one final project; and a final exam, available during finals week.

You are also expected to read and to post thoughtful comments at least twice-weekly at our online discussion forum. These postings should reflect knowledge gained from online and text readings.

X. JMC Department Attendance Policy: Your duty to online readings, interaction and assignments are 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.

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 a classmate during the final examination; 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 quizzes (fundamentally, that all answers are your own) are not allowed.

XII. Text and References: *Internet Effectively: A Beginner's Guide to the World Wide Web*, by T. Adams & S. Scollard (1st Ed., Pearson, 2006). Also, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Creating a Web Page and Blog, 6th Ed.* -- including companion CD-ROM -- by Paul McFedries (Pearson Education, 2002).

Students may come across instructional links to other works. They do not need to be purchased, but are suggested to learn more about

online media. One is ***Introduction to Online Journalism: Publishing News & Information*** by Roland De Wolk (Allyn & Bacon, 2001).

XIII. Course Prerequisites:

- Must be of junior- or senior-level standing;
- Must be acquainted with conventions of the Internet, specifically the World Wide Web, E-mail; and with the use of hardware and software to access them;
- Verbal and written proficiency in the English language;
- Successful completion of JMC 168, *Contemporary Mass Media*. The main necessary link to course material is through the Blackboard online platform:
<http://estudy.murraystate.edu/> and you'll be asked to log in.... see upper right, "my courses," JMC 390.
- Also check **RacerNet**, both for information and as a portal to BBoard.
- It is also wise to invest in McAfee or Norton's anti-virus software. A company called Grisoft distributes a free trial version that you may wish to check out. Avast is popular, and offers a full edition for no charge.

Itemized Course Components:

THREE QUIZZES (100 pts. ea)	300 pts.
INDEX PAGE PROJECT	150 pts.
FINAL PROJECT	200 pts.
ONLINE CLASS PARTICIPATION	200 pts.
FINAL EXAM	150 pts.

Quizzes and the final exam will focus upon readings and class lecture material, and will consist of roughly 70% short-answer / multiple choice questions; and 30% short essay.

The index page project is just that -- the first (index / home / default) page of your final project website.

The final project will consist of development of web content which could potentially be posted on an actual site. This content can take

focus upon either: **Issues** surrounding mass media's use of the web (such as privacy; profit; persuasion in advertising; problems facing public relations in the online world, for example); or could take the form of a **prototype online media enterprise**.

***Index Page Projects and
Final projects need not be posted on line for evaluation,
but can be submitted on disk, such as a CD.***

Murray State University Non-Discrimination Policy Statement:

Murray State University does not discriminate on grounds of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, or veteran's status in providing any educational or other benefits services of Murray State University to students or those applying for admission at Murray State University. Murray State University attempts to provide equal opportunity in all areas of student admissions, financial aid, employment, and placement and provides upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities.