

# INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION

**Monday & Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 12:20 p.m., Room #2963** (Truman College, FALL 2010)

---

**Instructor:** Benjamin Ortiz, Assistant Professor  
**Office/Hours:** #2737 — Mon. 8:30-9:30 a.m. / Tu. & Th. Noon-1 p.m. /  
Wed. 8:30-9:30 a.m. and 5-6 p.m.  
(...also by appointment, per your request and teacher availability...)  
**Phone/E-mail/Box:** 773.907-4376, [bortiz@ccc.edu](mailto:bortiz@ccc.edu), "Ortiz" in Room 2915

---

## → Course Description and Objectives

English 152 provides a brief survey of the dominant forms of mass communication and their place in society throughout history as pieces of both consumer-market culture and democratic empowerment. Through directed research and reading, students will analyze the current landscape of modern communication, investigate its roots, and begin to consider its development and future. Projects connected to the Truman College newspaper will also provide a context for practice of ethical mass communication, with an emphasis on the new technologies of journalistic convergence.

## → Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze the roots of dominant forms of mass communication while synthesizing arguments about the development and future of mass communication.
2. Strategize, plan, and produce web-based communications that will feed further journalism instruction and form the basis of marketable skills in journalism, public relations, marketing, business writing, creative writing, and academic writing.
3. Construct a writing portfolio to demonstrate skills for academic, career, and creative advancement.
4. Design, produce, and present multimedia journalism, by creating a storytelling project using a mix of technologies, mass-com ideas, and basic news reporting and writing skills.

## → Attendance and Preparedness Policies

Success in a journalism class depends on consistent preparation, attendance, and participation. Simply put: You did not sign up for a web class, and so you must arrive on time and ready for class. (Truman will have parking problems this semester, and therefore it's up to you to travel earlier, so you can arrive on time with your homework complete.) Lateness and absence also disrupt your teacher and classmates, who have a right to a classroom free from distraction.

So, please come to class every time, on time. **(For record-keeping purposes, 10 or more minutes late or missing will constitute a full and unexcused absence.)**

You are allowed two absences for whatever comes up (sickness, personal business, etc.), but you will start losing 1 full point from your Contributions grade for every absence thereafter – *six absences means an automatic zero for your Contributions grade*. This grade is worth 10 points toward your final grade – thus, if you do not show up on time and contribute, then your final assessment for the whole semester drops a full letter grade.

The teacher can also subtract for repeated tardiness, so please carefully manage your own time. Consider also that most sessions will begin with a quiz right at the starting time listed on the schedule for this class, the time you signed up for at registration.

Quizzes will be averaged and factor as 10 points toward your final grade, so if you miss or do poorly on them, then you are forfeiting another full letter grade in the final assessment.

**ALSO:** All assignments are due on the day specified on your syllabus or by the instructor. **Late work will not be accepted for any reason, and you are required to turn in work on due dates, at the beginning of class (within the first 10 minutes), even if you are absent.**

These rules emphasize the fact that consistent preparation and attendance are the only way to acquire the instruction you need, in order to reach the level of reading, writing, researching, reporting, and thinking that Truman College expects you to achieve in English 152.

### → **E-mail Communication and Reminders**

City Colleges of Chicago policy requires that all electronic communications about coursework between students and teachers should go through official **ccc.edu** addresses. Students are strongly encouraged to set up and check student e-mail accounts regularly. As a courtesy — *in addition* to reminders in class plus the full schedule that begins on page five of this document — Professor Ortiz will e-mail brief weekly notes to help review what has been covered and prepare for the upcoming week of instruction.

### → **Course Requirements**

(1) Preparation for class through careful time management, advance planning, thorough reading, complete research, etc. (2) Prompt arrival at class, consistent attendance, and full participation. (3) Completion of all assignments, readings, exercises, and projects. (4) Attention and courtesy to classmates, guest speakers, and instructor.

### → **Professional and Academic Etiquette**

(1) Absolutely no cell phones or other forms of electronic interruption. **THIS MEANS:** No texting, no taking calls, no keeping your gadget on vibrate, no hiding your phone nearby to look at it or play with it in class – TURN IT OFF, *please*. LAPTOPS are allowed for taking notes but NOT for net-surfing, etc. (2) Act with courtesy when class is underway; for example, ask classmates AFTER the session for an update on what you missed, if you are late. (3) Civil discussion: No name-calling or any such viciousness over disagreements. (4) Food and drink are OK only if you are badly in need of a snack, but don't go overboard or disrupt with eating noises. (5) Dig into the class. Be enthusiastic if possible, or at least offer questions, comments, and even relevantly provocative statements when you have the floor to speak. (6) Please come to class every time, on time.

### → **Academic Integrity**

All of the usual rules about plagiarism apply (refer to *Chronicle* article), as well as the principles unique to the practice of journalism, including rules about truth and rigorous fact checking. The teacher will expand on fabrication, conflict of interest, misinformation, dishonesty, reckless writing, and related ethical breaches. Violation of professional principles means that you are not only transgressing academic values but also the basic ethical considerations of journalism, on par with medical malpractice or attorney breach of ethics. Of course, the consequences can include failure of the course and expulsion from our community of student professionals.

The instructor will expand on these ideas, while the general rule applies that all sources for papers and the final project should be cited carefully and clearly, while direct quotes should be clearly identified. Failure to follow this rule will mean failure of the assignment, while intentional plagiarism, fabrication, conflict of interest, or any other such ethical breach will result in failure of the course.

#### CCC GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS

English 151 feeds the following General Education Goals: GOAL 1 (...communicate effectively in written and oral forms), GOAL 2 (...demonstrate the ability to gather, interpret, and analyze data), GOAL 3 (...demonstrate the ability to think critically, abstractly, and logically), GOAL 4 (...demonstrate the ability to perform effectively in the workplace), GOAL 5 (...exhibit ethical and social responsibility in a global community), and GOAL 6 (...learn independently).

## → Assignments/Grades

### **RESEARCH WRITING**

Four Mini-Research Papers = 40%

### **WEB PRODUCTION**

### **& JOURNALISTIC WRITING**

Weekly Web Contributions to  
the *Uptown Exchange*  
via Facebook and Twitter = 20%

Personal Blogging = 5%

### **FINAL PROJECTS**

Multimedia Journalistic Story = 20%

Writing Portfolio = 5%

### **CLASS CONTRIBUTIONS**

Participation, Quizzes, etc. = 10%

**FINAL GRADE NOTE:** Assignments and course progression make it impossible to pass the class without consistent attendance and engaged contribution. This is NOT a web class. The teacher also reserves the right to apply extra credit for exceptional attendance and participation.

<b>GRADE SCALE:</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>90-100</b>	=	<b>A</b>
	<b>Good</b>	<b>80-89</b>	=	<b>B</b>
	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>70-79</b>	=	<b>C</b>
		<b>60-69</b>	=	<b>D</b>
		<b>BELOW</b>	=	<b>F</b>

### **DATES to REMEMBER for YOUR OWN Planning**

**9/6/10 (Monday):** Labor Day Holiday (NO CLASS)  
**10/20/10 (Wednesday):** Fall 2010 Mid-Term Mark  
**11/15/10 (Monday):** Last day to withdraw from a course.  
**11/25/10 to 11/26/10 (Thurs.-Fri.):** Thanksgiving (NO CLASS)  
**12/12/10 (Sunday):** Fall 2010 semester ends!  
**1/18/11 (Tuesday):** Spring 2011 classes begin.

## → City Colleges “Active Pursuit” Policy

In order for students to remain in English 151, they must actively pursue the objectives for this course. At Mid-Term, any student who does not meet the following criteria for active pursuit will display a lack of interest in successfully completing the course and will therefore have to be administratively withdrawn from this class.

- A student must complete and turn in all major writing assignments (Research Writing, listed above) that are due before Mid-Term *on time* (per specified deadlines), including each and every rough draft required toward building a successful final draft.
- A student must have Web Production, Blogging, and Class Contributions grades of 75% or higher.

If any student fails to do the above, then it is his or her responsibility to contact the instructor prior to October 20, 2010, and indicate his or her serious intent to pursue the course by explaining any unusual circumstances. The teacher will then be able to determine whether the student can continue in the course. Being issued an ADW will have consequences on your grades, financial aid, and other aspects of attending Truman. Simply attending classes but not producing work and/or participating does not constitute active pursuit.

## → Disclaimer

All assignments, scheduling, and deadlines are subject to changes per class progression and instructor choice. Also, specific readings and exercises might change if alternatives arise.

## → Final Thoughts/Personal Statement

This first run-through of English 152 will be an experiment in directed individual study, and so I look forward to working with you to develop the course and make the assignments meaningful as an experience and valuable to your future studies and career goals. It's my hope also that you will help connect 152 to the experiences of new journalism students in English 151, as a mentor and informal adviser. I think also that this structure will allow for your interests to help shape the learning outcomes. Please be sure to check in and stay in communication so we can make this a successful semester. —Benjamin Ortiz, Assistant Professor of Journalism, Literature, and Writing

# → Calendar: Dates, Topics, and Assignments

## **WEEK ONE**

Mon. 8/23

Introductions, questionnaire, reading assignment (finish within a week)

Wed. 8/25

MASSCOM THEME ONE:

PRINT JOURNALISM, CONVERGENCE, AND NEW MEDIA LANDSCAPES

HOMEWORK: E-mail the professor a brief reaction to the assigned article.

Then, start on the First Mini-Research Paper:

In response to the reading, find two to three sources through Truman library database research (including at least one reference source and one scholarly or journalistic periodical source) that expand on the history of print (magazine and newspaper) journalism with respect to the current state of media. Follow this general Draft Map, and limit your paper to two to three pages, due by the end of Week Four:

INTRO – themes and ideas found through reading and research, leading to a thesis that takes a stand on the current media landscape's negative and positive aspects, dealing with the question of whether the consumer expansion of choices enhances or detracts from democracy. (NOTE: Be sure to cite your sources, both in terms of the ideas, data, and quotes you're using, and also use the MLA documentation style.)

BODY – First, briefly summarize the reading, and then summarize the sources you've found. Second, develop your thesis and position, while considering counter arguments.

CONCLUSION

## **WEEK TWO**

Mon. 8/30

→ Begin Personal Blogging via Blogger/Blogspot – see instructor for examples – to be completed every week by Sunday 10 p.m. (notify instructor).

→ Begin Web Production:

1. Take over Facebook account and start a Twitter account for the newspaper.
2. Begin to drive friends/followers (consult instructor and newspaper staff).
3. Add at least two pieces of content every week, by Sunday 10 p.m., consisting of newsworthy photos or video/audio, brief original news updates (per AP style), questions relevant to the newspaper readership to drive discussion, and/or relevant article re-posts with brief comments.
4. Notify instructor every week of these contributions.

Wed. 9/1

## **WEEK THREE**

Mon. 9/6

**LABOR DAY HOLIDAY – NO CLASS TODAY...**

Wed. 9/8

E-mail or drop by office hours with a draft of the First Mini-Research Paper.

## **WEEK FOUR**

Mon. 9/13

Wed. 9/15

First Mini-Research Paper due...

READING HOMEWORK: Using Truman library database research, custom e-mail alerts, or your own reading sources, find a medium-length article (1,000 to 3,000 words) relating to the current state and technology of books as a form of mass communication – share this with the instructor by Monday.

## **WEEK FIVE**

Mon. 9/20

MASSCOM THEME TWO:

BOOKS, FROM THE PRINTING PRESS TO THE IPAD AND BEYOND

HOMEWORK: Following the same approach, requirements, and draft map as with the first paper, start on the Second Mini-Research Paper, using the article you found on 9/15 as a starting point. Develop a draft by Week Seven to share with the teacher, and plan on finishing the paper by Week Eight.

Wed. 9/22

## **WEEK SIX**

Mon. 9/27

Wed. 9/29

## **WEEK SEVEN**

Mon. 10/4

Wed. 10/6

Share a draft of the Second Mini-Research Paper.

## **WEEK EIGHT**

Mon. 10/11

Wed. 10/13

Second Mini-Research Paper due...

HOMEWORK: Same deal as with Week Five, 9/20 (above), except your topic of research will consist of film or video (your choice), toward the Third Mini-Research Paper, due at the end of Week 12.

## **WEEK NINE:**

Mon. 10/18

## **MID-TERM MARK ON 10/20/10**

MASSCOM THEME THREE:

FILM/VIDEO: FROM SILENT MOVIES TO ON-DEMAND, 3-D, AND YOUTUBE

Wed. 10/20

Begin planning for the Multimedia Project (HANDOUT)

## **WEEK TEN**

Mon. 10/25

Wed. 10/27

Turn in a Reporting Plan for the Multimedia Project.

## **WEEK ELEVEN**

Mon. 11/1

Wed. 11/3

Share a draft of the Third Mini-Research Paper

## **WEEK TWELVE**

Mon. 11/8

Develop a basic outline of the Multimedia Project.

Wed. 11/10

Third Mini-Research Paper due...

HOMEWORK: Same deal as above, except your topic of research will consist of some aspect of music production and/or distribution (your choice, from radio broadcast to podcasts to MP3 files, etc.), toward the Fourth Mini-Research Paper, due the Final Week.

**WEEK THIRTEEN (LAST DAY to WITHDRAW on 11/15/10)**

Mon. 11/15                      Final Portfolio details (HANDOUT).

Wed. 11/17

**WEEK FOURTEEN**

Mon. 11/22

Wed. 11/24                      Share a rough-cut of the Multimedia Project with the class for critique.

**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY:  
NO CLASSES ON THURSDAY (11/25) AND FRIDAY (11/26)...**

**WEEK FIFTEEN**

Mon. 11/29

Wed. 12/1                      Share a draft of the Fourth Mini-Research Paper.

**WEEK SIXTEEN**

Mon. 12/6

Wed. 12/8                      Final Mini-Research Paper due...  
Final Portfolio due...  
Multimedia Story due...

---

**END OF CLASS!  
ENJOY THE WINTER BREAK!!!**