



*This is a Kent State University Trumbull campus course.*

## COURSE SYLLABUS

**Dr. Carol L. Robinson**

**Email:** [clrobins@kent.edu](mailto:clrobins@kent.edu)

**Website:** [cyberspacerobinson.org](http://cyberspacerobinson.org)

**Office:** 128D

**Office Phone:** 330-675-8907

**Office Hours on Tuesdays:**  
12:00-12:45 & 2:30-3:00

**Alternative Appointments for Online Real-time Text Conferences (KSU Google Chat):** Times vary and are strictly by appointment. See the Course Website.

**First Day of Classes:** August 25, 2022

**Our Class:** Online and on Tuesdays\* in Room 161 (1:00-2:15)

*\*We do not meet in the classroom every Tuesday! See the Course Plan for more information.*

**Last Day to Add or to Elect Credit/Audit/Pass-Fail:**  
August 31, 2022

**Labor Day (No Classes):** September 5, 2022

**Last Day to Drop:** September 7, 2022

**Midterm Grades Available:** October 13, 2022

**Last Day to Withdraw ("W" grade):** November 2, 2022

**Fall Break (No Classes):** October 13-16, 2022

**Veterans Day Observance (No Classes):** November 11, 2022

**Thanksgiving Recess (No Classes):** November 23-27, 2022

**Last Day of Classes:** December 11, 2022

**Final Exam Week:** December 12-18, 2022

### Course Description

This course fosters critical understanding of mass media in their historical, ideological, economic and cultural contexts—examining what forces influence media and how media influence consumers. Students will learn about the role of mass media in American history, how technological and economic factors influence mass media industries and consumers (particularly in terms of content), about the relationship between media providers and their respective audiences, about basic media literacy skills and the various forms of media communication, and to recognize new and ongoing diversity issues involving mass media communication in society.

From targeted advertising and viral videos to hashtags and Snapchat filters, the media has become a ubiquitous force in American culture and society, infiltrating virtually every aspect of our existence. Yet we don't often critically examine the values, norms, and ideologies that are disseminated through the media, or how they impact our everyday lives. This course aims to help you become more knowledgeable and critical consumers of mass media by introducing you to key issues, concepts and methods in media studies. We will explore the historical evolution of mass media into their current forms; the technological and economic forces that shape media industries; the legal and ethical issues at play in the media; and the role of mass media in a democratic society.

Media Power and Culture is included in the university's list of courses for the Kent Core and has been designed as a domestic diversity course. One of the key objectives of this course is to examine how media is impacted by intersecting systems of power including race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and disability. The word "power" in the course title can be interpreted in three ways: First, the course explores the powers that shape mass media: social, political, cultural, and economic. Second, the course explores the power media have to shape the perceptions and values of the audience. Finally, this course empowers Kent State University students to become more proactive media users, rather than passive media consumers. This course will help you develop critical media literacy skills that you can put to use in your own life as a Kent State student and beyond.

**Prerequisite:** None. *This course fulfills requirements for Diversity Domestic and Kent Core Social Science.*

**This is a Kent Core courses:** This course may be used to satisfy a Kent Core requirement. The Kent Core as a whole is intended to broaden intellectual perspectives, foster ethical and humanitarian values, and prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

**This is a KSU-Designated Diversity courses:** This course may be used to satisfy the University Diversity requirement. Diversity courses provide opportunities for students to learn about such matters as the history, culture, values and notable achievements of people other than those of their own national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and social class. Diversity courses also provide opportunities to examine problems and issues that may arise from differences, and opportunities to learn how to deal constructively with them.

## Learning Outcomes

When you are finished with the course, you should be able to:

- understand the role of mass media in American history, democracy and culture
- identify how technological and economic factors influence mass media industries, consumers and content
- interpret the relationships between media providers and their respective audiences
- use media literacy skills to critically analyze media content
- differentiate among various forms of mass media such as entertainment, journalism, advertising and public relations
- analyze the portrayals of underrepresented groups in both historic and contemporary mass media content
- demonstrate how social norms of race, class, gender, sexuality and disability are shaped by mass media

## Required Course Materials & Structure

- **This course is a hybrid online/on-land course.** We will meet, periodically, on Thursdays, 2:30-3:45pm in Room 253 on the Trumbull Campus. See the Course Plan for when we meet.
- You *must* have consistent use of a **reliable personal computer and Internet access. Computer technology issues are not a valid excuse for missed or delayed work.** *If you do not own a computer, please remember that there is technical and even emergency fund support at the Trumbull campus (see the links provided, or email me for more details).*
- This course makes use of the following:
  - [Cyberspacerobinson.org/courses/jmc/](http://Cyberspacerobinson.org/courses/jmc/)
    - the Course Syllabus
    - the Course Plan,
    - all Lessons (password protected: find the password in the START HERE module in Canvas)
    - all assignments, reading and viewing materials (there is no textbook)
  - **KSU Canvas**
    - posted grades
    - announcements
    - lessons password
  - **KSU Google Chat** (for optional online conferences)
  - **WeJoinIn** Appointments Sign-up Sheets (for online and on-land conferences)



## Course Time and Location

*This course is a hybrid:* online asynchronous and on-land synchronous. The class is functioning on the time zone for northeast Ohio. If, at some time in the semester, you are in a different time zone, you should check a web site (such as The World Clock at <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/>) to make sure that you submit your work on time. We will be communicating via email and live text-chat, in the classroom, and/or in my office.

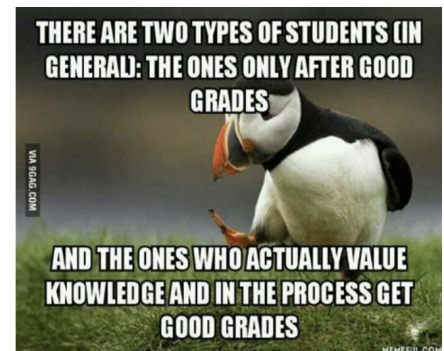
## Instructor Availability and Response Time



I am frequently available for online conferences (text-chat) via KSU Google Hangouts. I am also available to meet in my Trumbull Campus office, but only on days when we also have class on campus: see the sign-up sheets for on-campus office appointments. Feel free to sign up for a conference appointment any time; you do not have to wait for your mandatory conference appointment to meet with me! If none of the appointment times work for you, please email me with times that you are available. Alternatively, feel free to email me whenever you have questions or concerns ([clrobins@kent.edu](mailto:clrobins@kent.edu)). As a rule, I respond rather quickly to emails, often within the same hour. However, if you email me over the weekend (Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon), I am likely to respond less quickly, but will do so as soon as I am able. Please allow for at least 48 hours response time. **I'm here for you. If you work hard, I will work hard to help you.**

## Student Responsibilities

- Manage your time wisely.
- Read this Course Syllabus and the Course Plan—carefully.
- Follow the directions for all assignments—thoroughly.
- Complete all lessons and assignments.
- Attend on-land classes (Trumbull Campus) when they are scheduled.
  - It is crucial that you attend each class: on time and prepared.
  - If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to attain class notes from a fellow student, and you should order something nice (online) for them for those notes—at the very least!



## Course Content & Conduct

In this course we will read, think, and write about issues of power and oppression. This work is often difficult and uncomfortable, because some of the most important learning happens when we are pushed out of our comfort zones. You are encouraged to challenge yourself in this course while staying mindful of your own limits and boundaries. Our classroom will promote respectful engagement in which ideas will be exchanged and debated. However, some of the issues we cover in class might be controversial or emotional for some members of the class. It is therefore essential to show respect for your classmates and the classroom community—this is a requirement for the class. Class discussion should be conducted in a mature and professional manner, and comments that are racist, classist, sexist, heterosexist, ableist, transphobic, or otherwise discriminatory will not be tolerated.

## A Few Words Regarding Attitude



If you become stressed or find yourself not doing well in the course, don't "disappear" from the class. Instead, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am here for you. If you work hard, I will work hard to help you do as well as possible in the course. However, if you stop doing the course work, I will have no choice than to assume that you have given up on the course, and I will begin to give up on you. Even then, however, if you make the effort to reach out to me for help, as long as it is not too late, I will do what I can to help you succeed.

## Enrollment

University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking their class schedule (using Student Tools in Flashline) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline.

## Academic Engagement Verification

In compliance with federal regulations, the University is required to report that enrolled students have participated in at least one academically related activity. If no academic activity is submitted by the end of the fourth week of the semester (for a full-term course) then a grade of NF (Never attended F) will be assigned. The NF mark will count as an F in computing grade point averages. Students who have received an NF mark will lose their access to Canvas.

To avoid an NF mark, students must participate in at least one academic activity as soon as possible and no later than the end of the fourth week. Examples of some of the acceptable academically related activity are: physically attended the course (does not apply to online courses), submitted an academic assignment, completed an interactive tutorial, initiated contact with the instructor to ask a question about the academic subject matter, submitted an exam or quiz, participated in an online discussion about academic matters.



## Grade Distribution

<b>Media Analyses</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>500 points</b>
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>200 points</b>
<b><i>Trumbull Satellite Project</i></b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>200 points</b>
	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

## Some Assignment Details

### **Media Analyses | 50% (500 points); each essay is worth 10% (100 points)**

One of the goals of this course is to increase your ability to engage with various forms of media. Five times during the semester, you will be responsible for analyzing some media (a film, a television episode, some music, a newspaper article, etc.) using ideas and themes from the course in a 500-1000 word essay or similar sized chart (or a combination essay and chart). Specific assignment guidelines will be posted on the course main site (<https://cyberspaceroobinson.org/courses/jmc/>), linked to the Course Plan.

### **Midterm Exam Essay | 10% (100 points)**

This course mid-term exam essay is open-notes, and comprehensive (covering all course lessons and materials worked through up to the week before this exam is posted). This essay should be approximately 1000-1500 words long.

### **Final Exam Essay | 20% (200 points)**

This course final exam essay is open-notes, and comprehensive (covering all course lessons and materials). This essay should be approximately 2000-3000 words long.

### ***Trumbull Satellite Project* (20% | 200 points)**

Congratulations! You are a *Trumbull Satellite* Board Member for the semester! *Trumbull Satellite* is a developing multimedia publication, a digital magazine (that includes print, audio, and video). It is intended to be mostly student-run, but it is also intended to be a learning lab to be used by various Trumbull Campus instructors. There are several parts to this assignment. See the assignment for more details.

## Course Grades

No grade ever goes above the level of an A+ (never above 100/100 possible points, for example); likewise, no graded work ever goes below the upper level of an F points (never below 55/100 points, for example); however, if an assignment is never submitted, or is submitted too late to be graded, it will receive ZERO points. If your final course score is 64-63%, you will earn a D for the course; if your final course score is 62-60%, you will earn an F for the course. All assignments will be weighted according to the percentage value. All assignments will be evaluated on a 100 point scale as follows:

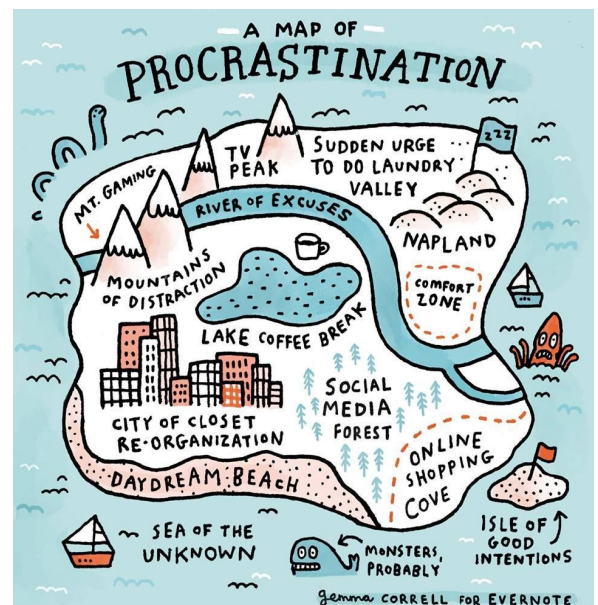
GRADE	Media Analyses	Trumbull Satellite Project				Midterm Exam Essay	Final Exam Essay	FINAL GRADE Conversion
		Proposal & Evaluations (10 points)	First Draft (20 points)	Peer Reviews (30 points)	Final Draft (50 points)			
<b>A+</b>	100-97	10	20	30	50	100-97	200-194	<b>4.0</b>
<b>A</b>	96-94	X	19	29	48	96-94	192-188	<b>4</b>
<b>A-</b>	93-90	9	18	28	46	93-90	186-180	<b>3.7</b>
<b>B+</b>	89-87		17	27	44	89-87	178-174	<b>3.3</b>
<b>B</b>	86-84	8	16	26	43	86-84	172-168	<b>3.0</b>
<b>B-</b>	83-80	X	15	25	41	83-80	166-160	<b>2.7</b>
<b>C+</b>	79-77	X		24	39	79-77	158-154	<b>2.3</b>
<b>C</b>	76-74	7	14	23	38	76-74	152-148	<b>2.0</b>
<b>C-</b>	73-70	X	13	22	37	73-70	146-140	<b>1.7</b>
<b>D+</b>	69-67	X		21	34	69-67	138-134	<b>1.3</b>
<b>D</b>	66-64	6	12	20	33	66-64	132-128	<b>1.0</b>
<b>D-</b>	63-60	X	11	19	32	63-60	126-120	<b>***</b>
<b>F</b>	55	5	10	17	28	55	110	<b>0.0</b>

No grade for submitted work ever goes above an **A** (100, 60, 50 or 40 points); likewise, no graded work ever goes below an **F** (55, 33, 27, points; however, if an assignment is never submitted, or if it is submitted too late to be graded, it will receive ZERO points. **Please see individual assignments for how items are evaluated (grading rubrics).**

### Regarding Missed, Late, or Incomplete Work

With the exception of Mandatory Conferences, late work will be accepted for a period of time after the due date; however, points will be deducted for late submissions. For each day the work is late: 3% (3 out of a possible 100 points, 6 out of a possible 200 points) will be deducted from the grade. No late work will be accepted if shared eight days or later past the due date.

**No work will be accepted after  
December 16, 2022 (11:59pm, EST)!**



## Diversity and Inclusion

College Writing is an inclusive class. In this class, you will be treated with respect and dignity and all students will be provided equitable opportunities to participate, contribute, and succeed. Students from all backgrounds and perspectives will be well served by this course, and the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource and strength. All assignments, activities, and discussions in this class will be respectful of diversity as it relates to gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. Read more about Kent State's [Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#).

## CCI Diversity Statement

Kent State University defines diversity as “the presence of difference.” The College of Communication and Information affirms that diversity enriches the teaching, study, research and criticism of the principles and practices of communication and information. Further, the faculty, staff and students maintain that communication and information can be understood fully and practiced effectively only when ideas from all people and perspectives are voiced and valued. CCI's culture intentionally fosters an inclusive environment, and CCI commits itself to being an academic unit in which all individuals feel empowered to participate fully.

CCI Diversity recognizes that our university faculty, staff and student body is made up of a complex and diverse group of people with different backgrounds and religious beliefs. Section 3 - 01.2 (c) of the Policy Register sites that class attendance may excused for religious observances. In an effort to help faculty and staff plan in the event that students request absences in their academic or work responsibilities during the school year, CCI Diversity has built this working interfaith calendar about the major religious holidays of the faiths frequently represented in the Kent State community.

## MDJ Diversity Statement

The Kent State University School of Media and Journalism recognizes the importance of a diverse faculty, staff and student body and embraces the concept that diversity will foster the acknowledgement, empowerment and inclusion of any person.

The School teaches the history, culture, values and notable achievement of persons who represent the world's diverse community. The mission of the school is to offer a strong curriculum, enriched by a legal and ethical foundation, which recruits, retains, promotes and hires from this diverse community.

The School believes that the highest levels of success, knowledge and progress arise when we learn from others who are not of our own national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, gender expression, physical and mental ability and social class. We welcome the many opportunities to examine challenges that may arise from differences.

One of our goals is to promote inclusivity and belonging among students, faculty and staff. MDJ's Diversity and Globalization committee is committed to serving as a resource to promote ongoing education and awareness about issues relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Please contact the committee at [mdjdiversity@kent.edu](mailto:mdjdiversity@kent.edu) if you have a diversity-related issue that you would like to discuss.

## Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Assault

Kent State University seeks to provide an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment and does not tolerate sex discrimination of any kind including: sexual misconduct; sexual harassment; relationship/sexual violence and stalking. If you have been the victim of sexual harassment/misconduct/assault we encourage you to report this.

Reporting Options:

- If you report this to a staff and/or faculty member, they are considered a mandated reporter who is required to notify our university's Title IX Coordinator at 330-672-7535 as per our policy 5-16.2 <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg>.
- If you wish to keep the information confidential, you may contact Kent State University counseling services at 330-672-2487 or 330-672-2208 to speak with a licensed counselor/psychologist.

Additionally, you may also report any gender-based discrimination and harassment to:

- Police Emergency: 911
- Kent State University Trumbull Security: 330-675-8832
- Center for Sexual and Relationship Violence (SRVSS): 330-672-9230

For more information about Title IX at KSU, please visit: <http://www.kent.edu/sss> or contact the Office of Compliance, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action at 330-672-2038 or [aa\\_eo@kent.edu](mailto:aa_eo@kent.edu).

## Mental Health Resources & Other Social Services

If you are in need of mental health assistance, please know that the University provides several resources. **Step Up & Speak Out** is a suicide prevention campaign with one of the most comprehensive lists of resources available for students, including **campus-specific information**. You can also find a list of resources, including domestic violence at **Mental Health Help**. Kent State also offers **Psychological Services**, including teletherapy. If you are struggling with attaining food, you might qualify for assistance from the **Ohio Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** or from the **Ohio Foodbanks Organization**. If you are struggling with housing and other basic care needs, please contact the **Trumbull County Homeless Shelters and Social Services** or the **Ohio Homeless Shelter Directory**. These sites also provide information for women in need of shelter, but if you are a victim of domestic violence (regardless of gender), you can also contact the **Ohio Domestic Violence Network**, **Domestic Shelters of Ohio Directory**, or even the **Kent State Women's Center**.

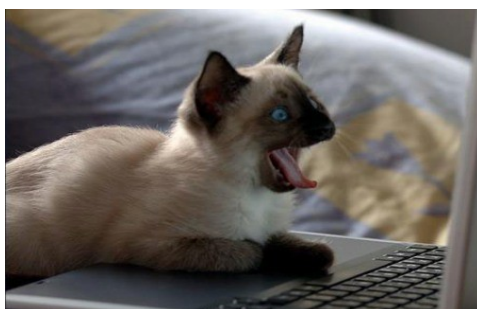


## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA governs both the access to and release of those records and the information they contain. Under FERPA, faculty have a legal responsibility to protect the confidentiality of student records even from parents and guardians. For additional information about FERPA, please visit the university Registrar's webpage.

## SAS: Student Accessibility Services

University policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact Elaine M. Shively at 330-675-8932 or visit <http://www.kent.edu/trumbull/student-accessibility-service>) for more information on registration procedures.



## Statements on Cheating and Plagiarism

University policy 3342-3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided for in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have questions, please read the policy at [http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel\\_datapageid\\_1976529=2037779](http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779) and/or ask your instructor. Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's thoughts, words, drawings,...

without giving that person due credit. Even if you use only a tiny part of that person's expression, you must give credit for that expression. Plagiarism carries a variety of sanctions, ranging from lowering of a grade to dismissal from the university.

The [School of Media and Journalism](#) deals in publishable works and educates its students for various aspects of publishing and other communications professions. Within this framework, every student must be aware of the following rules and definitions while in school or on the job:

- **Fabrication** is, in phrasing first used by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, the cardinal sin. Faking quotations, faking “facts,” reporting things that did not happen are not only reprehensible; they could be actionable in court.
- **Plagiarizing**, as defined by Webster, is “to steal and pass off as one’s own the ideas or words of another”. It is unethical and, in cases involving creative work, usually illegal. One of the worst sins a communications practitioner may commit is to plagiarize the work of another—to steal his/her words, thought, or outline and pass them off as his/her own.
- **Cheating** includes the submission of work in which you have received material and substantive assistance from others, or copied the work of others, when the assignment was intended to be completed by you alone. Unless specifically designated as a group project, all assignments for this course are intended to be the result of your individual efforts.
- **Duplicating work** is defined as submitting the same work to more than one instructor (or publication) without the prior knowledge and agreement of both.

Commission of any of these offenses while in school is grounds for disciplinary action. If the complaint is upheld, a variety of punishments may be imposed, from a reprimand to a lowered or failing grade in the course to dismissal from the university. Please refer to Kent State University’s Policy Register Section 3-01.8 regarding plagiarism: <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism> for more information.

## Intellectual Property and Privacy

Intellectual property displayed or distributed to students during this course (including but not limited to PowerPoint presentations, notes, quizzes, examinations) by the professor/lecturer/instructor remains the intellectual property of the professor/lecturer/instructor. This means the student may not distribute, publish or provide such intellectual property to any other person or entity for any reason, commercial or otherwise, without the express written permission of the professor/lecturer/instructor. Additionally, students may not distribute or publish recordings and/or links to live classroom presentations, lectures, and/or class discussions.

## MDJ Program Statement:

As a program accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, we are committed to developing a curriculum designed to meet twelve professional competencies. (The items in **bold** are specific to Media, Power and Culture.) This course, as part of a larger program, contributes to our development of:

THOUGHTFUL, PROFICIENT COMMUNICATORS...

- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- **demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.**
- **understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.**
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world.

...WHO ARE CREATIVE, CRITICAL THINKERS...



- **think critically, creatively and independently.**

...TRAINED TO UNCOVER AND EVALUATE INFORMATION...

- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.

...WITHIN A LEGAL AND ETHICAL FRAMEWORK...

- **Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in the United States, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;**
- **demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.**

...IN A DIVERSE AND GLOBAL SOCIETY.

- **demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation, and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.**
- **demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of people and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.**