MDIA 101 Foundations of Media | Course Syllabus

Section 3 | 34071 | T,TR | August 24 – December 11, 2026 | 3 credits
Section 4 | 36024 | T,TR | August 24 – December 11, 2026 | 3 credits

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MDIA Department Information:
Email: welovetcom@bsu.edu
Chair: Prof. Suzy Smith
Associate Chair: Dr. Betsy Pike
Assistant Chair: Prof. Paige Waters

Department Social Media Accounts:
Media IG, X, and TikTok: @BallStateMedia
Media LinkedIn: Click Here
CCIM Instagram, TikTok, X: @BSUCCIM
CCIM LinkedIn: Click Here
CCIM Blog: blogs.bsu.edu/CCIM

Course Description:
Introduction to the technology, industries, and regulatory structures involved in the electronic media. Provides an overview of media history with special emphasis on Internet, mobile, and emerging technologies. Not open to students who have credit in JOUR 101 or MDIA 101. Open only to approved media majors and minors.

Course Objectives:

Course Outcomes	**NACE Competencies*:**
Identify the basic functions, purposes, and impact of the electronic media in a free and democratic society	Career and Self Developement, Critical Thinking
Identify the major technology trends shaping the 21st century media landscape	Career and Self Developement, Technology
Review the main events and players (innovators, entrepreneurs, professionals, and institutions) in the developmental history of electronic media	Career and Self Developement
Identify various career paths available to media grads and their own career interests and	Career and Self Developement

preferences	
Understand the theories of visual communication	Career and Self Development, Oral/Written Communication
Understand the theories of narrative	Career and Self Development, Critical Thinking
Identify the major media conglomerates and their holdings	Career and Self Development

*Learn more about the National Association of Colleges and Employers 8 Workplace Competencies here.

Grading Scale:
Grades will NOT be rounded up. Grades will be available to see on Canvas.

A	**100.0 – 94.0**	**A-**	**93.9 – 90.0**	**B+**	**89.9 – 87.0**
B	**86.9 – 84.0**	**B-**	**83.9 – 80.0**	**C+**	**79.9 – 77.0**
C	**76.9 – 74.0**	**C-**	**73.9 – 70.0**	**D+**	**69.9 – 67.0**
D	**66.9 – 64.0**	**D-**	**63.9 – 61.0**	**F**	**60.9 – 00.0**

Required Resources

- University login information for access to BSU email and Canvas. Access to high-speed internet for viewing and downloading digital materials, and the completion of online assignments/assessments.
- **No textbook is required.** Required readings and other content will be freely provided via Canvas or through Bracken Library.

University Statement

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's *Disability Services* office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu

Absences for University Activities

The university expects its departments and programs that take students away from class meetings to schedule such events in a way that will minimize hindrances to the orderly completion of course requirements. Such units must provide a written statement to the students describing the activity and stating as precisely as possible the dates of the required absence. The involved students must deliver this documentation to the instructor, preferably before the absence but in no event later than one week after the absence.

Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's academic integrity website (students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments, class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)

- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

All academic dishonesty and plagiarism will be reported to the Office of the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs. You (or someone who cares about you) are spending life altering amounts of money for this degree. Please don't jeopardize that for the sake of momentary convenience.

Artificial Intelligence Tools

As you work on and submit assignments this semester, know that using generative AI tools to complete your assignments is a violation of Ball State's Academic Ethics Policy *unless* the AI use is explicitly approved by the faculty member. In general, students may not submit any work generated by an AI program as their own. Doing so is plagiarism. In courses and assignments where AI use is permitted, faculty will have guidelines for that use. Work created outside of those guidelines will be considered an Academic Ethics Policy violation. If a student's grade is affected by an academic ethics violation, faculty are required to report the violation to the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs who oversees the Student Academic Ethics policy and maintains records of its violations. More information about the reporting process is available here.

In our course, the assignment instructions will note if AI is an appropriate tool to use or not. If AI use is permitted for an assignment, I'll explain what's okay to do and what's not. If you're not sure, please just ask. It's a fairly new tool for everyone and it's okay to ask questions.

Attendance Info and Policies

- You are all adults, so you are responsible for getting yourselves to class. That said, I strongly encourage you to be in class every day if you are able. Failure to be present will result in you missing important information that will be foundational to your learning here in the Media department and your professional success after graduation. It is also likely that you will miss the info you need to complete assignments. Some reminders and updates, as well as chances to ask questions will be offered exclusively in person. Your grade will suffer more from missing out on information found within our lectures than it will from raw attendance points.
- I will provide an attendance code each day at the beginning of class. If you arrive after attendance has been taken, meet with me after the lecture so I can mark you present. If you do not meet with me the day of, I will not go back and change your attendance status. Entering a code to be counted present in class when you

are not present or sharing a code so someone can enter a code to be counted present is a violation of BSU's Academic Ethics Policy. Missing a day will not destroy your grade. Alternatively, repeatedly spoofing your attendance will not save your grade either.

- I am pretty flexible. I will give you grace for absences that are communicated in advance. I will give you 3 unexcused absences to course-correct before it begins affecting your attendance grade. Continued unexcused absences after the third freebie will result in a 2 point deduction from your attendance grade.
- If you no-call/no-show a class with an assignment connected to it, you cannot make it up. If I know ahead of time that you'll be gone, it might be possible to make up the points depending on what we're doing that day. Please, try and communicate a coming absence as early as possible so that we can work things out in advance.
- I encourage my students to actively pursue professional opportunities, so if you have a freelance gig, business meeting, or other kind of work-related event that conflicts with scheduled class time, please contact or speak with me a week in advance so that we can avoid any potential issues.
- We'll follow the university policies for students needing bereavement leave, those with COVID, those needing to be absent for religious reasons, and those participating in university events or class projects. The same goes for military deployment/duty/training, jury duty, or other legal obligations. Other absences will be excused at the discretion of the instructor. If you know you'll be gone, let me know so we can make a plan to handle what you're missing.

Ball State First Day

Students' course materials are available via Canvas and through the Ball State First Day partnership with Barnes & Noble. This program ensures students obtain all their course materials the first day of classes. ***Students are automatically enrolled in the program and charged the flat course material fee on their BSU eBill. Students can opt out of the program by the deadline listed on the "Course Materials" page in Canvas.*** Please review the program details to make the most informed decision regarding your course materials and participation in this program: Ball State First Day.

CCIM Student Success and Advising

For academic advising and student success support, visit the **CCIM Student Success and Outreach Hub in BC 210**. Schedule an appointment with an academic advisor through Navigate, or walk in during business hours for assistance from Student Success staff.

Class Meeting Expectations

We'll all have a better class experience if we're as present as possible while we're together. Headphones and earbuds will not be permitted outside of in class assignments

or if accessibility exceptions are required. Mobile phones should remain stored unless they are being used for note taking or emergency communication. These same rules apply to laptops and tablets. If a student is doing something during class that is distracting other students or myself, I will ask them to stop. If the behavior continues, I will ask them to leave. Please don't make me ask you to leave, I want us all to have a fun and productive time. If you need to take a call during class, it's okay to quietly leave the room, take the call in the hallway, and come back in when you're done. Life gets in the way sometimes, I get it.

Do not record audio or video of in-class lectures. Do not take photos of lecture slides. If there's a link or image that we look at in class that you want access to, let me know and I can post it to Canvas.

PLEASE: If you're having personal or other issues that are affecting your coursework or attendance, please come talk to me about it before you are overwhelmed. I want everyone to successfully complete the course and I can't help you if I don't know you are struggling.

Course Schedule and Assignments
The full course schedule with assignments, due dates, rubrics, etc. is available on Canvas. If you can't find something or if a link is broken, let me know ASAP so I can fix it.

Copyright Statement: Fall 2026
All materials for this class have been created for the private, non-commercial use of students enrolled in this class through Ball State University in the current semester. Any material provided to students, including, but not limited to, syllabus, lectures, class notes, PowerPoint presentations, assignments, information, quizzes, exams, or class news, is the property of the course instructor and/or Ball State University and may not be reproduced, distributed, or publicly posted without written permission of the instructor. Selling or distributing course materials may violate the Code of Student Conduct and/or the Information Technology Users' Privileges and Responsibilities policy. Violations will be reported to Dr. Mike Gillilan, Director of Student Conduct.
Addendum for Discussion Forums: Any discussion forum content shared among students for use in the course remains the property of the individual student and will not be copied, distributed, or used in any manner without written permission of the instructor and the student.

Course Withdrawal Deadline
The last day to withdraw from this course is Wednesday October 28, 2026.

Freedom of Expression
In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Grade and Due Date Policies
Don't be afraid to contact me if you have questions about an assignment. E-mailing me would be preferred. When doing so, please provide your name, course number, and section number so that I know who I am talking to. I will get back to you as soon as I can.

Due dates are posted with each assignment to keep you on track, but some of the dates are flexible and others are not flexible at all:

- **Quizzes, discussion boards, reflections, and response**s can be completed up to one week after the due date. They will close one week after the due date and will not be accessible after that.
- **Impact Project deadlines are firm**. Projects will not be accepted late unless arrangements have been made with me ahead of time. Depending on circumstances, a late penalty will likely apply.
- For all assignments, if you don't submit an assignment by the deadline, Canvas will enter a zero for that assignment automatically. This may or may not reflect your actual grade depending on late submissions. I grade on-time submissions first, so it may be a minute before your late work is reviewed.

Please contact me if you become worried about your grade, either an assignment grade or your course grade. You can e-mail me to have a written chat or to schedule a Zoom meeting. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

Grade Appeal Policy
If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the University Grade Appeal Policy and Process.

Inclement Weather and University Closings Statement

If inclement weather forces the closing of the university, that information will be made available on the Ball State website. If the university closes because of weather and this class is cancelled, information on the rescheduling of any assignments, exams, presentations, etc. will be made available on the class Canvas site as soon as possible, or will be sent to you via email, or will be announced at the next regularly scheduled class period. Any makeup of a class day cancelled because of weather will be determined by the university administration and will be announced in class or via email.

Media Content Warning
The media examples and scripts shared in this course may contain strong language, sexual situations, violence, controversial subjects, and ideas that might be disturbing or offensive to you. We will discuss all such content in a professional, academic manner. If you have any questions or want to talk to me about your concerns, please come to see me during office hours or make an appointment.

Student Course Evaluations
Evaluations will be completed sometime during the final week of the semester. Once the date is announced, please bring your laptop to class to ensure completion. Your evaluations of me as a teacher are invaluable to improving my methods and content moving forward. They are also entirely anonymous, so if you have an issue with my approach feel free to tear me to shreds.

TITLE IX
Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit bsu.edu/titleix or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu.

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment.
This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.
What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant chooses to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

- Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules,

and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.
- If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.