

## Mass Communications

College of Arts & Humanities  
Department of Mass Communications  
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Web site: [www.mnsu.edu/masscom](http://www.mnsu.edu/masscom)

Chair: Chuck Lewis

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The mission of the Department of Mass Communications is to foster the public good by advancing socially responsible mass communication through education, research, and service. The department strives to prepare students for careers as ethical and responsible public communicators, competent in such fields as news, public relations and media studies. The program enables students to:

- I. have knowledge of the purpose and functions of the mass media/mass communications industry. Students should be able to:
  - demonstrate an understanding of the role and effects of American media.
  - demonstrate an understanding of racial, gender, cultural, socio-economic and political-diversity issues, and their connections to media.
- II. possess the skills to gather, assess and organize information and to compile that information in a clear, concise, balanced and ethical way. Students should be able to:
  - write clearly and concisely, in a style appropriate for the profession, audience and purpose served.
  - work ethically to serve the public interest through pursuit of truth and accuracy.
  - conduct and analyze research appropriate to the profession.
- III. develop awareness of their roles in the mass communications discipline as ethical and responsible communicators, and apply their practical skills in professional work in the mass communications area of their choosing. Students should be able to:
  - understand and apply the principles of the First Amendment.
  - critically evaluate their own work and that of others for appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
  - critically evaluate their work and that of others for accuracy and balance.

Admission to Major is granted by the department. Contact the department for application procedures.

Proficiency in English grammar, spelling, composition and keyboarding is essential for admission to the major. A diagnostic test in English usage is required to determine such proficiency. The department requires that students complete with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better these courses (or their equivalents): ENG 101 and MASS 110. Overall GPA will also be considered in determining admission status. Students not meeting minimum requirements may petition the faculty in writing to seek admission.

No student entering the mass communications program may take courses beyond MASS 110 unless he/she has met the stated requirements. Students seeking entry into the department's major must present evidence of their satisfactory fulfillment of these requirements.

In preparation for undertaking a major in mass communications, students should consider taking these courses (or their equivalents): ECON 100, An Introduction to the U.S. Economy; GEOG 103, Introductory Cultural Geography; ETHN 100, American Racial Minorities; POL 371, State and Local Government; PSYC 101, Psychology; SOC 100, Social Problems; and SOC 101, Introduction to Sociology.

### MASS COMMUNICATIONS BA, BS

Required General Education (11 credits):

- ENG 101 Composition (4)  
MASS 110 Introduction to Mass Communications (4)  
POL 111 United States Government (3)

Required for Major (Journalism Option):

Core (28 credits)

- MASS 221 Media Writing I (4)  
MASS 312 Mass Communication Law (4)  
MASS 322 Media Writing II (4)  
MASS 341 Editorial Process (4)  
MASS 351 Photojournalism (4)  
MASS 411 Ethics and Press Criticism (4)  
MASS 431 Magazine Article Writing (4) OR  
MASS 436 Specialized Writing (4)  
MASS 498 Internship (1)

Elective (12 credits)

Choose at least 8 credits from the following courses:

- MASS 242 Radio Station Operation (2)  
MASS 290 Selected Topics (1-3)  
MASS 334 Writing and Speaking for Broadcast (3)  
MASS 353 Advanced Photojournalism (2)  
MASS 360 Publications Layout (4)  
MASS 381 Reading for Honors (1)  
MASS 412 History of Mass Communications (4)  
MASS 425 Advanced Reporting (3)  
MASS 431 Magazine Article Writing (4)\*  
MASS 433 Public Relations Principles (4)  
MASS 436 Specialized Writing (4)\*  
MASS 480 Mass Media Seminar (1-3)  
MASS 490 Mass Communication Workshop (1-3)  
MASS 499 Individual Study (1-2)

\* May be chosen as elective if not included in core.

Required for Major (Public Relations Option):

Core (33 credits)

- MASS 221 Media Writing I (4)  
MASS 312 Mass Communications Law (4)  
MASS 360 Publications Layout (4)  
MASS 411 Ethics and Press Criticism (4)  
MASS 433 Public Relations Principles (4)  
MASS 434 Advanced Public Relations Writing (4)  
MASS 440 Strategic Communication Research (4)  
MASS 450 Strategic Communication Campaigns (4)  
MASS 498 Internship (1)

Elective (8 credits)

Choose at least 12 credits from the following courses:

- MASS 224 Radio Station Operation (2)  
MASS 290 Selected Topics (1-3)  
MASS 322 Media Writing II (4)  
MASS 334 Writing and Speaking for Broadcast (3)  
MASS 341 Editorial Process (4)  
MASS 351 Photojournalism (4)  
MASS 381 Reading for Honors (4)  
MASS 412 History of Mass Communications (4)  
MASS 431 Magazine Article Writing (4)  
MASS 436 Specialized Writing (4)  
MASS 480 Mass Media Seminar (1-3)  
MASS 490 Mass Communication Workshop (1-3)  
MASS 499 Individual Study (1-2)

Required for Major (Media Studies Option):

Core (27 credits)

- MASS 221 Media Writing I (4)  
MASS 312 Mass Communications Law (4)  
MASS 411 Ethics and Press Criticism (4)  
MASS 412 History of Mass Communications (4)  
MASS 498 Internship (1)

One or more of the following (2):

- MASS 290 MASS 490 MASS 499

One of the following writing courses (4):

MASS 322 MASS 431 MASS 436  
One of the following design/editing courses (4):  
MASS 341 MASS 360

## Elective (14 credits)

Choose at least 14 credits from the following courses:

MASS 242 Radio Station Operation (2)  
MASS 290 Selected Topics (1-3)\*  
MASS 322 Media Writing II (4)\*  
MASS 334 Writing and Speaking for Broadcast (3)  
MASS 341 Editorial Process (4)\*  
MASS 351 Photojournalism (4)  
MASS 353 Advanced Photojournalism (2)  
MASS 360 Publications Layout (4)\*  
MASS 381 Reading for Honors (1)  
MASS 412 History of Mass Communications (4)  
MASS 431 Magazine Article Writing (4)\*  
MASS 433 Public Relations Principles (4)  
MASS 434 Advanced Public Relations Writing (4)  
MASS 436 Specialized Writing (4)\*  
MASS 490 Mass Communication Workshop (1-3)\*  
MASS 499 Individual Study (1-2)\*

\* May be chosen as elective if not included in core.

NOTE: Several mass communications courses serve as both required core courses for one of more options and elective choices for one or more options. Registration priority is always given to students for whom a course is a core requirement.

Required for Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree ONLY:  
Language (8)

Required Minor: Yes. Any.

MASS COMMUNICATIONS MINOR: NOT OFFERED

## POLICIES/INFORMATION

GPA Policy. Majors must earn a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better in all mass communications coursework, in addition to the 2.0 overall GPA required by the University for graduation.

Refer to the College regarding required advising for students on academic probation.

P/N Grading Policy. Mass communications majors are required to take department courses for a letter grade, except for MASS 498, which must be taken P/N.

Transfer Credit. The department accepts no more than 13 credits from other colleges and universities as transfer credits to be applied toward the major or minor. They must be taken in courses that match or are the equivalent of courses that are either offered by the department or allowed by it for elective credit as shown in the areas of concentration.

Internships. Opportunities for mass communications internships exist on and off campus for junior and senior majors who want to work in professional settings. The internship must be done under professional supervision and is taken only after the student has (1) completed all prerequisite courses in his/her option area; (2) submitted a department internship contract signed by the student, the student's internship supervisor, and the department chair.

Filing a Program. By the end of the sophomore year the student, through individual consultation with a department advisor, should complete and file with the department a proposed program.

The department recommends that students develop a program of study that is complementary to their major in mass communications. Students concentrating in journalism are encouraged to minor in courses in liberal arts, such as art, English, literature, modern language, history, humanities, philosophy, or political science. Students concentrating in public relations are encouraged to

minor in courses in business administration, marketing, English, psychology, sociology, or speech.

Communication Facilities. In addition to a fully equipped modern computerized classroom, the Department of Mass Communications has access to a broad range of on-campus facilities that provide students practical experience. Students majoring in mass communications may contribute to producing a student-oriented campus newspaper, The Reporter, a campus literary magazine, and programming for KMSU-FM radio.

Counseling and Guidance. The key to the department's selective approach to mass communications education is its counseling and guidance program. Students are encouraged to choose a department advisor. Working closely with this faculty person, students develop academic programs that relate to their needs, interests and career aspirations.

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### MASS 110 (4) Introduction to Mass Communications

Nature, functions, responsibilities and effects of the media in contemporary society.

Pre: None.

GE-9 CD-Related

### MASS 221 (4) Media Writing I

Basic techniques of gathering information and writing readable and accurate media stories.

Pre: ENG 101, MASS 110 F, S

### MASS 242 (2) Radio Station Operation

Principles of radio station operation, radio-production techniques and study of FCC requirements.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 290 (1-3) Selected Topics in Mass Communication

Selected topics in mass communications.

Pre: MASS 221 or consent Variable

### MASS 312 (4) Mass Communications Law

Principles of the First Amendment, libel, fair trial, privacy, access to news, pornography and regulation of radio and television.

Pre: MASS 221, POL 111 F, S

### MASS 322 (4) Media Writing II

Problems and techniques in reporting about public affairs and social issues.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 334 (3) Writing & Speaking for Broadcast

Planning, writing and delivering of broadcast news.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 341 (4) The Editorial Process

Instruction and practicum in editorial production: design and layout, editing, headlining, computerized typesetting.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 351 (4) Photojournalism

Instruction and practice in the use of the still camera, film-based photographic processes, and computerized image production. Exploration of photo journalistic principles. Students must provide own camera.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 353 (2) Advanced Photojournalism

Guided experiences in techniques and practicum of journalistic photography.

Pre: MASS 221 and MASS 351 Variable

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### MASS 360 (4) Publications Layout

Practicum in typography, design layout and production processes, including job budgeting and estimating, for newspapers, magazines, newsletters, brochures, posters, annual reports, direct mail and related print materials. Emphasis on graphic-design software.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 381 (1) Reading for Honors

Directed reading program in literature of mass communications. For mass communications students who maintain 3.0 GPA or better.

Pre: MASS 221 and 3.0 GPA F, S

### MASS 411 (4) Ethics & Press Criticism

Study, analysis and criticism of the mass media, their ethics and performance.

Pre: MASS 221 and MASS 312 F, S Variable

### MASS 412 (4) History of Mass Communication

Study of people and events that have shaped the American press.

Pre: MASS 221. Variable

### MASS 425 (3) Advanced Reporting

Advanced news reporting in depth; investigative and research techniques; background and feature series.

Pre: MASS 221 and MASS 322 Variable

### MASS 431 (4) Magazine Article Writing

Marketing and writing of non-fiction articles for print and electronic magazines.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 433 (4) Public Relations Principles

Survey of current practices and problems in the field of public relations. Emphasizes successful case histories and planning techniques.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 434 (4) Advanced Public Relations Writing

Practical skill in the development of public relations writing including news releases, brochures, psa's, pitch letters, annual reports.

Pre: MASS 433 Variable

### MASS 436 (4) Specialized Writing

Techniques and practicum in writing of features, reviews, editorials, opinion columns and other specialized fields for print and electronic media.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 440 (4) Strategic Communication Research

Research methods in strategic research for public relations and other persuasive media industries, including applied quantitative and qualitative methods.

Pre: MASS 433 Variable

### MASS 450 (4) Strategic Communication Campaigns

Development of strategic communication campaigns used in public relations and other persuasive industries; includes decision-making, planning, and programming for implementing a campaign.

Pre: MASS 434 and 440 Variable

### MASS 480 (1-3) Mass Media Seminar

Advanced studies in reading, writing and discussion on the practice, issues and literature of journalism.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 490 (1-3) Mass Communication Workshop

Discussion and hands-on experience involving mass media activities. Topic varies.

Pre: MASS 221 Variable

### MASS 498 (1) Internship

Practical mass media experience in a professional setting.

Pre (Journalism Option): MASS 221, 312, 322, 341, 351.

Pre (Public Relations Option): MASS 221, 312, 360, 433, 434.

Pre (Media Studies Option): MASS 221, 312, 341 or 360, and one of the follow-

ing: MASS 322, 334, 431, 436. F, S

### MASS 499 (1-2) Individual Study

Directed research on a mass media topic chosen by the student.

Pre: MASS 221 F, S

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