

Course Abstract

If you need accommodations due to a disability, contact Disability Services in Edison Hall Room 100, 732.906.2546.

To foster a productive learning environment, the College requires that all students adhere to the Code of Student Conduct which is published in the college catalog and website.

Course ID and Name: COM 131 Introduction to Broadcasting

Department: Visual Performing Media Arts

Chairperson: Annie Hogan

Office Location: CC 341

E-Mail: AHogan@middlesexcc.edu

Telephone: 732-906-2589

Prerequisites: COM 105

Co-requisites: N/A

Course Description:

A comprehensive introduction to the historical development and regulatory policies of radio and television broadcasting. Emphasizes the social, economic and ethical impact of radio and television on society and its citizens.

General Education Status:

Credits:

3

Lecture Hours:

3

Lab Hours:

0

Learning Outcomes:

1. Explore the historical development of radio, television broadcasting, and electronic mass media.
2. Recognize and evaluate the social, economic and ethical impact of radio, television, and electronic mass media on society.
3. Discuss and analyze issues of social responsibilities and regulatory fee policies and censorship in media.

Course Content Areas:

Electronic Mass Media:

The Information Superhighway is examined, which includes websites, instant messaging, social sites such as Twitter and Facebook. Other terms associated with

such media include convergence, divergence, common carriers, broadcast and hybrid services.

Historical Perspective:

An overview of the evolving concepts from broadcast to electronic mass media are examined. The historical timeline includes the Penny Press, Vaudeville, phonograph, motion pictures, telegraph, telephone, wireless communication, the vacuum tube, transistors and the computer chip. Several historical figures are discussed such as, Thomas Edison, Samuel F.B. Morse, Alexander Graham Bell, Heinrich Hertz, Guglielmo Marconi, Lee deForest, Reginald Fessenden, David Sarnoff, Philo T. Farnsworth, Frank Conrad, William Paley, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Alan Freed. Certain acts that are examined include, the Radio Act of 1912, the Radio Act of 1927, the Communications Act of 1934 and the Sixth Report and Order

Cable Television:

The emergence of cable television is examined, including the concepts of microwave relays, the differences between broadcast and cable, must carry rule, 1972 regulations, 1977 deregulations, TVRO and Ted Turner's "superstation" concept. The electronics revolution and consumer media are also examined.

Commercial Operations

The anatomy of a broadcast station is analyzed, which includes station functions (departments), roles and responsibilities of sales, news, programming and technical functions. Broadcast tv networks are examined, including network programming, syndication, affiliations, local origination, advertising basics and the concept of clearance.

Programming Basics:

Target audiences and the concept of segmentation are examined. In addition, the Parsimony Principle is analyzed with related concepts of syndication exclusivity, financial interest and syndication rules and the prime time access rule. Various types of programs are compared and the programming strategies are analyzed. Such strategies include counter-programming, block, stripping, lead-in, lead-out, hot-switching, hammocking, bridging and stunting.

TV Genres:

A comparison of tv genres is conducted which includes, situation comedies, various types of dramas, reality, game shows, dramedies, spinoffs, clones, miniseries, made for tv movies, music and variety, soap operas, magazine shows and talk shows.

Children's Issues/Effects:

Many children's issues are examined including violent programming, direct imitation, desensitization theory, Gerbner's cultivation theory and the FCC's response to such issues. This would include tv ratings guides, advertising restrictions, v-chip technology and other strategies.

News:

Certain news elements are examined including, gatekeeping, agenda setting, status conferral, double speak, and political coverage.

Ratings:

An analysis is conducted regarding the differences between ratings and shares. Actual calculations are performed for both. The ratings business is examined as well as research methods. Diaries, people meters and other devices are discussed to acquire data. Other concepts examined include TSA (total survey area), TSL (time spent listening), HUT (households using television), PUR (persons using radio) and focus groups.