Mass Communications

Mr. Brocato

Syllabus and Day 1 and beyond

We will be covering both the print and television media in this class. While we will not be delving into the strict history of the media, we will be covering the things we see in the media during out current day lives. How does the media effect us? Help us? Hinder us? Manipulate us? Many current articles will be examined and you will also play the role of the reporter as you will go out, report and write stories. The primary skills to be obtained will be:

 \*being inquisitive

 \*questioning things

 \*analyzing things

 \*solving issues

 \*writing

I use a total points system for grading. That is, things are weighted differently depending on the assignment so therefore you will not be seeing a “40% for this category” type of system. Instead, I will tell you how much something is weighted. If it’s a quiz, it may be 100 points. If it’s an in depth story you covered and wrote over a one week period, it may be worth 300 points. The bigger the assignment, the larger the number.

Additionally, you will see many “CP Check” grades. It stands for class participation check. Because this is a hands on and “do” course, what you accomplish in class pays big dividends or causes many a downfall. It’s simple, even if you are a less than talented writer, you can really pick your grade up by doing everything I ask in class. It also works the other way as well…a very talented but mute student suffers.

If you are absent, your CP grade will of course suffer. Also, upperclassmen like to come in at 8:00 when a class meets first. You will not be given credit for the day if this is the case so don’t bother. It’s disruptive and tiring. Of course, I can understand you oversleeping occasionally, but if you are showing up late every first period? Like I said, don’t bother. **CLASS PARTICIPATION IS UPWARDS OF 30% OF YOUR GRADE.**

Take a thoughtful stroll around the school with a notebook in hand. Spread out from classmates. One of the big things in this class is how I can measure your level of **inquisitiveness.** Do you blindly go through life or do you notice your surroundings? As you go around the school, begin to list items that “require investigation.” FIND THE STORY. They’re out there. Find them. Good reporters look at the ordinary and say to themselves “there’s a story here…somewhere.” Dog bites man? No story. Man bites dog? Better. Come back and share.

Below are some pretty basic and vanilla questions, but try to answer them thoroughly.

1. **List 5 words that come to mind when you think about the media. Be able to explain.**
2. **What have been your three most memorable media events/images in your life? Why so memorable. Don’t be broad (do not write “9/11,” rather, write “a man jumping from tower”)**
3. **The quote “if it bleeds, it leads.” In what ways is the media biased? Does that bother you? In what ways are you MANIPULATED by the media?**
4. **What type of reporter is most successful in today’s media market?**
5. **What traits make up the ideal reporter and why?**
6. **Ever been written about in the paper? Talk about it**
7. **Is the social media (twitter, facebook, etc) bettering our society or eating away at it?**

Your HW, immediate and beyond…

You will write a 3 page research paper on one of the two topics listed below. Choose one:

**MEDIA ETHICS**

**or**

**THE MEDIA AND ITS ROLE IN OUR SOCIETY**

1. Needs to be MLA formatted
2. Typed, three pages, double spaced
3. Parenthetical citations as per MLA (at least three citations for each paragraph, taken from two sources minimum)
4. Do not use I
5. Works cited page. Everything should be properly spaced according to MLA. The first thing I do is look at the WC page. If it is out of whack, I don’t read the paper. Go here if you need refreshing: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/search.php>
6. Nothing is accepted late. If you are not here, email the paper to eghsbrock@yahoo.com.

THIS IS DUE IN ONE WEEK

Next obligation:

1. Do some basic research on First Amendment rights and Freedom of the Press. What are your rights as a reporter? Are they different as a high school reporter?
2. You are to find at least 4 court cases involving journalism issues and detail the outcome. Take all sorts of notes and come to class ready to share.

HAVE A SMALL NOTEBOOK HANDY FOR CLASS FOR YOUR REPORTER’S NOTES