# COM 264 – Media Programming
## SPRING Session 2026, Section 01, 3 credit hours – Fully Online via Canvas
## School of Communication, Illinois State University

**Professor:** Dr. Maria A. Moore
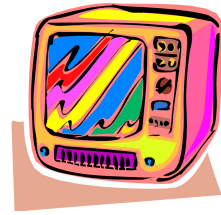**Virtual Office Hours:** by request via FaceTime or Skype
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*Email contact with your Professor: My email address is listed above. I review email daily and should be able to respond within 24-36 hours.*

**Course Description:** this course examines the format and scheduling of programs as practiced by station, cable, and network and other program suppliers and viewed from the perspective of the advertiser, the manager, the consumer, and the government.

## Learning Objectives

We will spend our time in this course focused on this key-learning objective:

How programs are strategically distributed to an audience in the framework of a for-profit business plan.

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

o   Exhibit a substantial increase in knowledge about the programming strategies of TV, radio, cable, and other electronic media.

o   Analyze through case studies the major programming functions within the electronic media, in particular broadcast television strategies.

o   Demonstrate evidence of professional competence in sequence-specific skills.

o   Know about programming career opportunities in the electronic media.

o   Understand how laws, regulations and ethics impact programming decisions.

o   Demonstrate an ability to create, monetize, promote, market, distribute, and syndicate original creative programming content.

o   Independently apply critical thinking skills to examine significant programming issues.

| Readings & Subscriptions | **There is no formal textbook for this course.** You will be responsible for lesson readings posted through our Canvas site. You will also need a free subscription to CYNOPSIS (or other Media Newsletters) and access to viewing broadcast television programming over the air, via cable, through the Internet, or with a HULU subscription. More detail about the subscriptions is found within the course. |
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## Course Activities with Evaluation Opportunities

**For all items below, deadlines and more comprehensive details are provided within the Canvas lessons. A rubric will be provided for each assignment. Only assignments submitted through Canvas will be graded and the materials submitted will be the only ones reviewed. You are responsible for submitting the version you want graded.**

**Quizzes:** There will be an online quiz for each topic covered based upon the readings posted in Canvas.

**Topical Example Report:** Students are expected to report on current events relating to media programming through finding and discussing a relevant example for that lesson's topic.

**Documentary Viewing Project**: Students will select and view a documentary from the list provided and will analyze it base upon the prompts provided.

**Program Launch Project:** Each student will select a newly launched television program and will analyze the product launch via content learned in this course.

**Your Pitch Project:** As a culminating project in this course, students will complete a project development their own programming pitch.

| Evaluation Opportunities: Grades based upon total points. **Points are not rounded-up** | Points | # | Total Possible |
|---|---|---|---|
| Quiz based upon the lesson's readings | 20 | 5 | 100 |
| Topical Example | 40 | 5 | 200 |
| Documentary Viewing project | 50 | 1 | 50 |
| Program Launch project | 75 | 1 | 75 |
| Your Pitch project | 75 | 1 | 75 |
| Total: | | | 500 |

**Grade Range:**

| | |
|---|---|
| A | 450- 500 |
| B | 400-449 |
| C | 350-399 |
| D | 300-349 |
| F | Below 299 |

## Course Policies

**Skills for Online Class:** As you are registered for an online course, it is assumed that you have the basic computer skills necessary for participating in and completing a class online. Familiarity with your computer, its programs, and its operating system will help you succeed as an online student. Within our Canvas site, students must be able to send messages to their instructor, upload attachments, post assignments, communicate with other students, and navigate the course site. Your instructor should not be relied upon as a technical tutor for the course. Motivation and organization are necessary skills required for online learning. Students must organize themselves for every aspect of class, including submitting assignments by the indicated deadlines and scheduling and taking tests within the designated time frames. Although online learning provides a flexible modality of study, the rules for successful completion are rigid. Therefore, accommodations cannot be made when students deviate from the deadline expectations as stated on the course site.

**Participation:** This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, and most rely on active and prepared participation from all of us. When participating online, be ENGAGED with the elements of each lesson. While you are engaged with the course turn off your cell phones, use your computer for coursework only, don't be tempted by game-playing, email, texting, browsing or chatting.

**Time:** We will respect one another's time in this course. For each lesson, we will start and end on deadline. We will use our time fully and productively. **You should expect this course to require approximately 9-12 hours of time for each week of this course.**

**Canvas:** Students will be expected to have a working knowledge of Canvas and to regularly log into Canvas. Inability to use or have access to Canvas will compromise your success in this class.

**Assignment Due Dates**: Deadlines are firm and non-negotiable, as they would be in the professional world. All times listed are Central Time (CT). Clear deadlines are essential to the fair treatment of students who do complete assignments on time. Assignments are happily accepted early. All course elements are to be submitted via Canvas.

**Tech Problems:** Technical issues are not considered valid excuses for handing in late work. Canvas can be accessed from any computer with Internet access. If you experience technical problems on your home computer, you have the option of using a colleague's or family member's computer, a public library, etc. It is also your responsibility to be certain that your assignments are submitted/uploaded properly and received by your instructor.

**Special Needs or Accommodation**: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu. Please email me privately regarding any course adaptation or accommodations you may require.

**Technical Skills and Requirements:** The software and hardware requirements for this course are consistent with what is available on your university computer. Participants are required to have access to and working knowledge of a computer with dependable Internet access. A good wireless connection is sufficient for most of the learning activities; however, a high-speed cable Internet connection may be necessary for some video or other multimedia.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student's placement of his or her name on any academic exercise shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own thought, effort, and study. Students who have questions regarding issues of academic dishonesty should refer to the University regulation that outlines unacceptable behaviors in academic matters. It is the student and faculty's responsibility to uphold the principles of Academic Integrity. Academic Integrity is an important part of this University and this course. Academic Integrity is required of you the student and myself as the instructor. Academic Integrity should be used in preparation of this course, in class time, regarding exams, and with regard to written assignments. In certain circumstances (such as cheating or plagiarism) faculty may be required to refer a student(s) to Community Rights & Responsibilities for a violation of Illinois State University's Code of Student Conduct. *(Quoted from "Community Rights and Responsibilities at Illinois State University".)*

Also, please note this particular ISU policy. "Inappropriate use of resources includes any use of ISU Information Technology Resources and Systems that violates state or federal law [such as sharing or selling intellectual property created by faculty members, e.g. notes, assignments, assessments, that are made available to them through enrollment in an online course], University policies or procedures, or interferes with the University mission."

Participants should have the some of the following software installed on the primary computer used for the course:

1. **MS Word.** You can purchase a "home" copy of Microsoft Office from TechZone in the Bone Student Center.

2. A program that lets you read and save PDF versions of documents such as **Microsoft Save as PDF or Adobe Reader.**

3. **Quicktime**. Quicktime is a free program that allows you to listen to audio files or watch video files. You can download Quicktime from the Quicktime Download Page.

4. **Adobe Flash Player**. You download the free Flash Player from the Flash Player Download Page.

5. **Java**. This should also be part of the standard install on your departmental machine, and is likely also installed on your personal computer. You can check for the latest update at the Java Download Page.

6. **Firefox** (for Windows). Firefox is a free browser and can be downloaded from the Firefox Download Page.

7. **Safari** (for Mac). Safari is a free web browser and can be downloaded from the Safari Download Page.

If you need assistance installing software on a departmental machine, please contact your local (departmental or college) tech support person. If you need assistance installing software on a personal computer, you should contact the Illinois State University Computer Help Desk (309.438.HELP, 7:30AM – Midnight, 7 days a week).

## Netiquette

We agree to interact in a positive, cooperative and supportive manner and display respect for the privacy and rights of others. All course communication should be conducted in Standard American English to ensure understanding among diverse participants.

## Study Tips

Though study of media programming can be a formidable subject, you may find this course to be compelling, interesting and valuable towards achieving your future goals. Purposeful study and critical thinking are more important than mere memorization of facts in this course. Here are some suggestions you might consider:

As you study the assigned readings prior to completing the module quiz and assignments, make notes as you read. Think about how you might use the information you've read to complete the lesson.

Consider forming an informal study group with two or three other members of the class (you can find your fellow classmates through "People" on our Canvas site. Support and challenge one another as you read, study and discuss.

## Core Values

o Deep learning is not passive, it is not easy, and it is not accidental.

o We will purposefully welcome and encourage the consideration and discussion of conflicting ideas without rudeness.

o We will celebrate our different ways of being, learning, and living without judgment or ridicule.

o We will regularly consider the impact of becoming a civically engaged citizen.

o We will interact with one another with grace and civility, recognizing each person's unique value and accomplishments.

o We will recognize enterprise and creativity; but will also value silence and critical reflection.

o We will remember that humor connects us, person to person, and brings out our authentic self.

## Note for Media Majors

Portfolio Artifacts--One of the culminating experiences of a mass media degree is the completion of COM 396 Mass Media Capstone, a course that includes the preparation of a personal portfolio to organize and showcase your abilities. I encourage you to retain items from this class for inclusion as portfolio artifacts. Beyond the Capstone class, your portfolio may also prove a valuable tool as you seek entry into a graduate program or employment in your areas of specialization.

*Note: This syllabus may be amended at any time. Any changes will be confirmed in writing.*

# MEDIA PROGRAMMING -- COM 264 – SPRING 2026
# LESSONS AND DUE DATES

**Lesson 1: Beginnings** (DUE TUESDAY JANUARY 20, 11:55PM, CENTRAL TIME ZONE)

- Complete the on-line lesson
- Know the course syllabus and performance expectations

**Lesson 2: The Program** (DUE TUESDAY JANUARY 27, 11:55PM)

- Complete the online lesson and read materials and then **take quiz (20 points)**
- **Complete Assignment: Topical Example (40 points)**

**Lesson 3: Distribution of Programming** (DUE TUESDAY FEBRUARY 3, 11:55PM)

- Complete the online lesson and read materials and then **take quiz (20 points)**
- **Complete Assignment: Topical Example (40 points)**

**Lesson 4: The Audience** (DUE TUESDAY FEBRUARY 10, 11:55PM)

- Complete the online lesson and read materials and then **take quiz (20 points)**
- **Complete Assignment: Topical Example 40 points)**

*>>Work on your Documentary Viewing Project* (NOTHING DUE TUESDAY FEBRUARY 17)

**Lesson 5: View a Documentary Project** (DUE TUESDAY FEBRUARY 24, 11:55PM)

- **Complete Documentary Viewing Assignment (50 points)**

**\*\*\* 1st Half Late Work Due Tuesday March 3, 11:55pm for 50% credit**

**>> Spring Break March 9-13 <<**

**Lesson 6: The Business of Programming** (DUE TUESDAY MARCH 17, 11:55PM)

- Complete the online lesson and read materials and then **take quiz (20 points)**
- **Complete Assignment: Topical Example (40 points)**

*>>Work on your Program Launch Project* (NOTHING DUE TUESDAY MARCH 24)

**Lesson 7: Your Program Launch Project** (DUE TUESDAY MARCH 31, 11:55PM)

- **Complete Program Launch Assignment (75 points)**

**Lesson 8: Pitching a Program Concept** (DUE TUESDAY APRIL 7, 11:55PM)

- Complete the online lesson and read materials and then **take quiz (20 points)**
- **Complete Analyze a Pitch Bible Assignment (40 points)**

*>>Work on your Original Program Pitch Project* (NOTHING DUE TUESDAY APRIL 14)

**Lesson 9: Your Original Program Pitch Project** (DUE TUESDAY APRIL 21, 11:55PM)

- **Complete Original Program Pitch Assignment (75 points)**

**\*\*\* 2nd Half Late Work Due Tuesday April 28, 11:55pm for 50% credit**

*NOTE: NO FINAL EXAM, NO WORK DUE DURING FINALS WEEK*