Short Assignment for
Communications in a Global Age
Communications 100

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Introduction for Faculty Colleagues

Fit
This assignment fits in a course like COM100 because it allows the students to think of the state of mass media and of the communications professions in the current, technology-driven world.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to:

- Refer to some historical developments and/or the current state of a medium or a profession
- Think about the influence of the medium or the profession in society
- [Depending on the topic, to think of best practices vs. not-so-great practices in the field]
- Support statements with evidence
- Recognize opposing perspectives and realize that his/hers is not the only perspective available or possible
- Think of the strengths and weaknesses of the perspective he/she provided and of the opposite perspective.
The Assignment I Distribute to Students

COM 100 – Communications in a Global Age

Instructions
After reading the book chapter, two conflicting statements dealing with the topic of the chapter are presented. The student selects one statement and defends it with evidence and arguments from the chapter (and from other sources). The student writes a 1-page to 1.5-page response defending the statement selected. The next class, the student presents his/her arguments to a student who selected an opposing statement, and they respond to each other. The tasks for the assignment will be to:

• Read the chapter

• Use the information in the chapter as a source to advance your point of view (for instance, use facts, examples, and evidence obtained from the chapter; having other sources besides the textbook is encouraged)

• Write your 1 to 1.5-page long defense of the statement

• Provide evidence to support your arguments (use in-text citations)

[A slight alternative to this assignment will be the YES, NO, or OK BUT… approach]

Using evidence/examples/reasons/perspectives from the chapter, and using evidence/examples/reasons/perspectives that you find/think on your own, say YES (accept and expand), NO (reject and refute) or OK BUT… (Find the value in the statement, but include arguments/facts/perspectives not considered) to the following statement*

*See the list of statements at the end of this document. Use one statement per class or per chapter. I am including several examples that would cover several weeks/chapters.
**Evaluation Criteria**
- Assignment turned in on time (2 points)
- Quality of the arguments presented (4 points)
- Inclusion of examples/facts/perspectives from the textbook (and other sources) (4 points)

**Besides (Mechanics Grade)**
After determining the content grade (10-point scale), up to 10 percent of the assignment grade can be deducted for grammatical errors, spelling errors, factual errors or for not following instructions. You will receive a zero for plagiarizing an assignment. Be careful with the “copy-paste” method.

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**Deadline**

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List of Statements

- Traditional newspapers might disappear, but people will always need news stories to obtain information.
- People will obtain information in different ways in the future; for that reason, news stories will no longer be needed and newspapers will surely disappear.
- What Fox News and MSNBC offer the viewers is respectable journalism, in their own style.
- What Fox News and MSNBC offer the viewers is information, but not respectable journalism.
- Public Relations is not spin, public relations allows organizations to build positive relationships with the publics the organization/corporation serves.
- Public Relations is spin, as it is information constructed and distributed on behalf of the organization to advance the organization’s point of view.
- Advertising has no real value in society. It promotes consumerism, unhealthy habits (like eating junk food and sugary sodas), and debt accumulation through out-of-control spending.
- Advertising provides value to society by informing them about the qualities of different products and services that can improve their lives. It also helps people select the best choices available for them.
- Media ownership in the United States (in mainly a few large conglomerates instead of smaller owners) threatens freedom of information and alternative views about important issues in the marketplace of ideas.
- Media ownership in the United States (in mainly a few large conglomerates instead of smaller owners) promotes freedom of expression and alternative views about important issues in the marketplace of ideas.
- Movies become successful only if they are Hollywood blockbusters (productions with large budgets, action-packed, full of visual effects, acted by celebrities, where the richness of the plot or story is only secondary).
- Movies become successful only if they concentrate on having a good story or plot, solid acting and human emotions (where
large budgets and special effects are not necessary or dominant)

- To increase the ratings, it is impossible to avoid producing junk television. The audience wants to watch this type of TV shows (think of shows such as The Kardashians, Jersey Shore, Teen Mom, Honey Bo Boo...).
- To increase the ratings, it is necessary to avoid producing junk television. The audience will NOT watch this type of TV shows (think of shows such as The Kardashians, Jersey Shore, Teen Mom, Honey Bo Boo...) if better alternatives are provided.

- If I ever have daughters, I will not be concerned about the images of women that my daughters will find on television, magazines, and movies. For that reason, if I ever work in the media industry, I will not change the status quo (the current state of things).
- If I ever have daughters, I will be concerned about the images of women that my daughters will find on television, magazines, and movies. For that reason, if I ever work in the media industry, I will try to change the status quo (the current state of things).

- Online social networks like Facebook and Twitter are positively changing the way we interact with each other.
- Online social networks like Facebook and Twitter are negatively changing the way we interact with each other.