Unit 5: Mass Communication

5a: Identify the characteristics of mass media and mass communication.

5a.1. Define mass communication and mass media.

5a.2. Define the following characteristics of mass communication: correlation, entertainment, mobilization, sensationalization, surveillance, transmission, validation.

5a.4. Why are mass media described as gatekeepers?

Based on how confident you feel with the concepts of mass communication and mass media, you may choose to review the definitions and characteristics in the following resources from subunit 5.1: Survey of Communication Study: “Chapter 8: Mass Communication”.

5b: Identify the effects of mass communication on human communication.

5b.1. Over the decades, mass communication and mass media have had a number of effects on how we communicate and how cultures have developed.
A. Explain how each of the following mass media affected society and our expectations of government: printing press, radio, television, internet, and social media.
B. Explain how mass communication has affected the way we develop and maintain interpersonal relationships reflecting on the concepts of masspersonal communication and the global village.

For a review of media effects on human communication, review the subheadings on the history, functions and theories of mass communication and the media in Survey of Communication Study: “Chapter 8: Mass Communication” found in subunit 5.1 and Jon Hoffman’s video “Media and Audience” in subunit 5.2.

5c: Explain a number of different mass communication theories.

5c.1. Define the following mass communication theories: cultivation theory, magic bullet theory, multi-step flow theory, two-step flow theory, and uses and gratification theory.

Throughout the course resources, a number of theories have been presented. Some explain the general nature of human communication and others specifically explain how communication is used or affects outcomes in more specific areas of our lives. Consider reviewing these theories of mass communication in Survey of Communication Study: “Chapter 8: Mass Communication” in subunit 5.1.

5d: List ethical concerns regarding mass communication.

5d.1. We often expect higher ethical behavior from individuals who produce mass mediated messages because the mass media has such a profound impact on all members of society.
A. List ethical concerns regarding mass media and mass communication.
B. Explain the key concepts media literacy, based on the eight principles of media literacy.
C. Apply the National Communication Association code of ethics to the practices of mass communication.

To prepare for the final exam, be sure to review the ethical elements in Unit 1 as well as the following resources in Unit 5: Survey of Communication Study: “Chapter 8: Mass Communication” found in subunit 5.1, Judith Comfort’s “Media Literacy Key Concepts” from subunit 5.3, and The video clips in subunits 5.3 (Dan Gillmor’s “Renee Hobbs Discusses Media Literacy”) and 5.4 (University of Wyoming Television: “Ethics in Social Media”).