MCC-UE 1: Introduction to Media Studies  
Fall 2015

Course Description: This course introduces students of media, culture, and communication to the themes, issues and theoretical debates central to the modern study of mediated forms of communication. It examines the factors that influence the media and, in turn, examines the influence of media on attitudes, behaviors and identities, both individual and social. Students will be expected to develop an analytical appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of media theories and related concepts, build a vocabulary for making sense of the mediated world, and to arrive at some thoughtful conclusions regarding their own ideas and tools.

Course Materials: There is no textbook for this class; all readings (a mix of academic papers and journalistic accounts, some of which explain ideas and some of which illustrate them) can be downloaded here.

Assignments
Participation: 20%
Tests: 15% x 3 / 45% total
Final Exam: 35%

Course and School Policies
Grading Rubric
A = Excellent / This work is comprehensive and detailed, integrating themes and concepts from discussions, lectures and readings. Writing is clear, analytical and organized. Arguments offer specific examples and concisely evaluate evidence. Students who earn this grade are prepared for class, synthesize course materials and contribute insightfully.
B = Good / This work is complete and accurate, offering insights at general level of understanding. Writing is clear, uses examples properly and tends toward broad analysis. Classroom participation is consistent and thoughtful.
C = Average / This work is correct but is largely descriptive, lacking analysis. Writing is vague and at times tangential. Arguments are unorganized, without specific examples or analysis. Classroom participation is inarticulate.
D = Unsatisfactory / This work is incomplete, and evidences little understanding of the readings or discussions. Arguments demonstrate inattention to detail, misunderstand course material and overlook significant themes. Classroom participation is spotty, unprepared and off topic.
F = Failed / This grade indicates a failure to participate.

Participation: Active participation is expected from all students. Readings are to be completed prior to lecture each day. Respond to questions in lecture and be an active participant in your recitation section. (Students who are less comfortable speaking up in lecture in section can also contribute relevant links and materials to the shared Classes...
chat for their section.) Regular attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences from your recitation section will be penalized.

**Grade Appeals** If you want to appeal a grade, send a short note explaining your concerns to your teaching assistant within a week of receiving your grade. (Grades that stand longer than a week will be taken as correct, and appeals will not be considered.) The teaching assistant will set up a meeting to review the grading. If, following this review, you still believe the grade to be in error, you can escalate the grading to the professor, who will re-assess and independently determine a final grade (which may be the same or lower).

**Academic Integrity** The Steinhardt School’s *Statement on Academic Integrity* governs all student work in this course. “Academic integrity,” it says, “is the guiding principle for all that you do; from taking exams, making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others, and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours.” Please familiarize yourself with the details of the statement.

**Students with Special Needs** Students with special needs, such as physical and/or learning disabilities, should register with the Moses Center and follow their guidelines for informing the course instructors who will arrange “reasonable accommodations” as requested.

**Religious Observance** In accordance with NYU’s *Policy on Religious Holidays* students who observe religious holidays that may interfere with the class schedule should inform course instructors well in advance of anticipated absences to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the completion of course work.

**Writing Center** Students are encouraged to make use of NYU’s *Writing Center*.

**Schedule of Classes**

**Part I: Introductions**

9/3: First Day – introduction and overview

9/8: Media and mediation

9/10: Culture
   Arjun Appadurai: “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,”
   *Theory Culture Society* (1999)

9/15: Visual culture

9/17: Society

9/22: Critique
   Alex Ross, “The Naysayers,” *The New Yorker* (September 15 2014)

**Part II: Institutions**

9/24: Discourse

9/29: Public and publics

10/1: Imaginary

**10/2: Test 1 in Recitation Section**

10/6: Mass media

10/8: Globalization.

10/13: Legislative Day (no classes)

**Part III: Influence**

10/15: Ideology

10/20: Imperialism
10/22: Hegemony

10/27: Propaganda

10/29: Agency

10/30: Test 2 in Recitation Section

Part IV: Identities

11/3: Identity

11/5: Performativity

11/10: Gender and sexuality

11/12: Habitus and class

11/17: Race

11/19: Mimesis

Part V: Information

11/24: Information
11/26: Thanksgiving Recess (no classes)
12/1: Panopticon

12/3: Privacy
   **12/4: Test 3 in Recitation Section**

12/8: Design

12/10: Network
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2/15: Last Day – review and summation

12/22: Final Exam, 8:00–9:50 (as scheduled by the Registrar). No exceptions.