This interactive and discussion-oriented course provides an introduction to key debates of media policy and regulation, from telecommunications policy to news and entertainment media to Internet policy, framing them in relation to democratic theory and ethical concerns. The course traces the history of media policy through the development of radio, television, Internet and telecommunications policy, and digital media, with examinations of how media policy gets created and shaped in and outside Washington, D.C., and the central role played by these policies in structuring the kinds of media that we consume and create.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, students will:
- Demonstrate understanding about how our media system is governed and the key media policy debates
- Be familiar with U.S. media policy history and major texts within the field
- Identify how media policy relates to democratic theory and ethical concerns
- Formulate analyses about the future trajectory of U.S. and global media systems

* A note on email policy: Emails should be reserved for only urgent issues or for setting up appointments. All questions regarding readings, assignments, etc. will be answered during class. I am also available for questions immediately after class or during office hours.

Please note: Students with special needs, either with physical and/or learning disabilities, or religious observances, should inform me immediately at the beginning of the semester in order to assure any special needs (extra time for papers, etc.). I will do my best to make sure that every accommodation the University makes available will be granted in these cases.

A note about the syllabus and readings:
In addition to the readings listed in the syllabus, I will assign more reading and writing projects throughout the semester. In particular, I will be assigning short news stories on a weekly basis. All readings, papers, in-class quizzes and projects, and presentations are required unless noted otherwise. Most readings will be found online. Occasionally I will hand out readings in class, but unless otherwise indicated, students are responsible for printing out, reading, and bringing online materials to the class for which they are assigned.

Course Requirements and Grading:
Attendance is required at all scheduled class meetings. I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. Missing two unexcused class meetings will lower your final letter grade by a whole letter. Missing four class meetings means you are failing the course, and requires you to consult with me immediately. Students arriving to class 10 minutes late will not receive credit for attending class that day. Notify me in advance if you are going to miss a class or a deadline. You will need a legitimate excuse (doctor’s note, etc.) to submit to me immediately upon returning to class following absences. Excuses for absences during the course will not be accepted at the end of the semester.
You should come to each class ready to answer questions about the readings. Failure to do so will affect your grade. Your grade is based on a midterm paper, a class presentation, in-class writing assignments, class participation, and a final research paper.

Grade breakdown:
30% Class participation (in-class writing, homework assignments, quizzes, and class discussion).

35% Class presentation (5%) & midterm paper (30%) (students will select a policy problem to present to class and turn in a 5 page proposal/early draft for a longer research paper).

35% Final research paper (15-20 pages on a student-selected policy problem using both primary and secondary sources).

* Assignment sheets that provide information about formatting and other details will be distributed in class.

Reductions:
2 unexcused absences Reduction of one letter
4 unexcused absences Failure of class
Failure to turn in an assignment on time Reduction of half letter from grade for each day

Extra Credit- Possible extra credit assignments will be announced in class.

Grading Scale
94-100 A; 90-93 A-; 87-89 B+; 83-86 B; 80-82 B-; 77-79 C+; 73-76 C; 70-72 C-; 67-69 D+; 63-66 D; 60-62 D-; 0-59

Evaluation Criteria
A = Excellent
This work demonstrates comprehensive and solid understanding of course material and presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights and well-reasoned analysis. “A” work includes skillful use of source materials and illuminating examples and illustrations. “A” work is fluent, thorough and shows some creative flair.

B = Good
This work demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of course material, presenting a reasonable degree of insight and broad level of analysis. Work reflects competence, but stays at a general or predictable level of understanding. Source material, along with examples and illustrations, are used appropriately. “B” work is reasonable, clear, appropriate and complete.

C = Adequate/Fair
This work demonstrates a basic understanding of course material but remains incomplete, superficial or expresses some important errors or weaknesses. Source material may be used inadequately or somewhat inappropriately. The work may lack concrete, specific examples and illustrations and may be hard to follow or vague.
D = Unsatisfactory
This work demonstrates a serious lack of understanding and fails to demonstrate the most rudimentary elements of the course assignment. Sources may be used inappropriately or not at all. The work may be inarticulate or extremely difficult to read.

F = Failed.
Work was not submitted or completed according to parameters (page length, topical focus, types of sources), or completely failed to express the most basic and elementary aspects of the course.

plus (+) or minus (-) grades indicate your range with the aforementioned grades.

Grades will not be curved. If you attend class, do the required work and have a reasonable grasp of the information, you should have no trouble earning at least a C, which indicates satisfactory work. No make-up quizzes will be given. You are expected to abide by the NYU’s and Steinhardt’s standards of Academic Integrity. Cheating or plagiarizing the work of another will result in an automatic “F” on the exam or assignment. Additionally, departmental and university policy permits harsher actions, if warranted.

COURSE OUTLINE
(I will make minor alterations to the reading assignments throughout the semester, so please pay close attention as we go along. Additional weekly readings will be dictated by current policy debates.)

Jan. 25

Introduction: Fundamental Questions for Policymaking

Consider these questions: What is the role of media in a democracy? What is the function of government in regulating media’s democratic role?

Feb. 1

The Politics and Policies Behind Media


Online summaries of the Federal Communications Commission.
Feb. 8

### 1920s, 30s and 40s Media Policy


Feb. 22

### 1950s and 60s Media Policy


Online readings on The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, the 1968 FCC Carterfone decision, and the 1969 Red Lion Supreme Court decision.


Mar. 1

### 1970s and 80s Media Policy


Online readings on the Cable Communications Act of 1984.

**Mar. 8 MIDTERM PAPER DUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>1990s and 2000s Media Policy</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Mar 22: Class Presentations Begin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Media Ownership</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Who Owns the Media? (Media Ownership Distribution Chart).” <em>Freepress.net.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattelart, Armand. “Cultural diversity belongs to us all.” <em>Le Monde Diplomatique</em> (Nov 2005):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mar 29: Class Presentations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Network Neutrality and Beyond</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


We will look at the most recent efforts in Congress and the FCC to mandate network neutrality protections.

April 5: Class Presentations

Spectrum and Broadcast Policy


April 12: Class Presentations

The Politics and Policies of Digital Media


**April 19**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Future of U.S. Media: Problems &amp; Prospects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

We will look at recent policy debates, including those connected to broadband buildout, handset exclusivity, “tv everywhere,” and Internet governance.

**April 26**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imagining Alternative Communication Models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
May 3

Crises and Opportunities in Journalism


**FINAL PAPER DUE May 7th 5 PM**