Introduction to Media Studies
MCC-UE-001

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, values and behaviors, both individual and social. Students will be expected to develop an analytical appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of various media theories and to arrive at some thoughtful conclusions regarding their own theoretical preferences. A simple question guides our inquiry: what does it mean to say that we live in the age of media?

Course Materials
There is no textbook for this course. Instead, we will make use of a variety of scholarly articles, research reports, and primary documents to map to the themes, issues and theoretical debates central to the modern study of mediated forms of communication. Many of these documents will be available via direct links or via Atlas. Others will be available in a “reading kit,” available from Advanced Copy Center, 522 LaGuardia Place (with a copy on Reserve in Bobst).

The course will also make use of audio-visual material, including documentaries, audio files, still and moving images culled from a variety of sources and usually available via ATLAS.

Style Manuals
Students are strongly urged to purchase at least one style manual. A good style manual helps improve the organization and composition of your written work and, used properly, will ensure proper citation of sources. Here are two recommendations:
• Kate Turabian. *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago University Press, 2007

Evaluation: Tests, Assignments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class Quiz (Two @ 15% each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Take-Home Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review/ Research (Four @ 10 % each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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GENERAL COURSE AND SCHOOL POLICIES

Grading Rubric
(Plus and minus grades indicate the standing within the above grades)

A  Excellent (numerical equivalent: 90 – 100%)
Outstanding work in all respects: comprehensive understanding, thoughtful and creative interpretations, well-focused and original insights, well-reasoned commentary and analysis. Writing is clear, analytical, and organized. Arguments offer specific examples and concisely evaluate evidence. Class participation is consistent, insightful, and respectful of others.

B  Good (numerical equivalent: 80 – 89%)
Work demonstrates complete and accurate understanding of course materials, presenting a reasonable degree of
insight and a competent level of analysis with proper evidence. Writing is easy to follow and well structured. Class participation is consistent and respectful of others.

C Adequate (numerical equivalent: 70 – 79%)
Work demonstrates adequate understanding but may be incomplete, vague or contains some important errors or weaknesses. Work may lack concrete, specific examples and illustration. Writing may be awkward or hard to follow. Arguments are unorganized, without specific examples or analysis. Class participation is unreliable, off-topic, and/or disrespectful of others.

D Unsatisfactory (numerical equivalent: 60 – 69%)
Work demonstrates a lack of understanding and fails to express basic aspects of the course. 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. Class participation is spotty, superficial, and/or disrespectful of others.

F Failed. Work was not submitted or completed according to assigned parameters or completely failed to express the most basic and elementary aspects of the course.

Grade Appeals
Send a short note to your teaching assistant explaining your concerns. The teaching assistant will set up a meeting to review the grading. If you remain unsatisfied with your grade, follow the same procedure with the professor.

Late Assignments
Late assignments are subject to a penalty equivalent to five (5) percent for each day after the due date. In letter terms this typically translates into a reduction of one place on the letter scale (e.g. from B+ to B) for each 24-hour period. Teaching assistants may reduce or waive this penalty at their discretion based upon individual circumstances. It is always best to discuss such circumstances with your teaching assistant BEFORE the assignment is due.

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 (Register at Moses Center for Students with Disabilities)
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 (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 (411 Lafayette, 3rd Floor) Students are encouraged to make use of NYU's Writing Center.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

IntroMedia/F2012-9.02/2
Date          Topic
9/04          Course Logistics
9/06          Summer Media Events: 2012
9/11 & 13     Defining the Terrain: Communication, Media and Culture

DUE: Friday, September 14 (by 4:00 pm): 1st Assignment. Sapir, Postman and Social Media

9/18          No Class
9/20, 25 & 27 The Media Industry: history & economics of media institutions
                Reed Hundt, “The Internet as "The Common Medium,” Media Law and Policy, 19 (2) 2010
                Video: Tim Wu. “How to Build An Information Empire,” TEDxEast, Dec 09, 2010
                Youtube link

DUE Friday, September 28: 2nd Assignment: Reading a 10K

10/2          Quiz 1

10/4          Meaning-Making and Visualization

10/09 & 11    The News: Content, Conventions, and Professional Routines

10 /18, 23

**Media and Identity: Race & Ethnicity**

Charlton McIlwain, “From deracialization to racial distinction: interpreting Obama’s successful racial narrative,” *Social Semiotics*, 2012


*Video: Color Adjustments: Blacks in Prime-Time*

**DUE: Monday, October 29 (by 6:00 pm), 3rd Assignment: Revisiting Erving Goffman**

10 /30 & 01

**Media and Identity: Gender**

Gaye Tuchman, “Women’s Depiction by the Mass Media,” *Signs*, 4 (3), Spring 1979, 528-542


11 /13

**Quiz # 2**

11 /15 & 20

**Media Effects Mass Culture, Mass Panic, and Mass Persuasion**


11 /27

**Limited Effects**


11 /29

**Violence and Sex: effects revisited**


Gerbner video clip from *Killing Screens*

12 /4 & 6

**Make No Law: Freedom of Speech and Freedom of the Press**

FCC v Pacifica Foundation, 438 U.S. 726 (read to end of fn29 of majority decision)  
Yochai Benkler, "WikiLeaks and the Protect-IP Act: a new public-private threat to the Internet commons," *Daedalus*, 140 (4), Fall 2011, 154-64  

View and Listen: Carlin Interview and performance of Filthy Words

**Due Date: 4th Assignment: Review Essay on Media in Other Places, Monday, 10 December**

12/11 & 13  **Globalization and New Media: Issues and Ethics**  