

Department of Media, Culture, and Communication MCC-UE 0001 Introduction to Media Studies

Course Description

Introduces students to the study of contemporary forms of mediated communication. The course surveys the main topics in the field and introduces students to a variety of analytical perspectives. Issues include the economics of media production; the impact of media on individual attitudes, values, and behaviors; the role of media professionals, and the impact of new media technologies.

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to define media and mediation, as well as many other key concepts necessary for their studies in MCC; to describe relationships and effects between media and institutions, politics, models of society, new technologies, and key historical turning points; and to identify and outline major theories of what media are and how they work.

Readings/Texts

All readings are available for individual download as PDFs from NYU Box:
<https://nyu.box.com/v/mcc-1-2018-readings>. A single .zip file of all the readings is also available:
<https://nyu.box.com/v/mcc-1-2018-readings-zip>.

Assignments

Students are expected to do the assigned reading for the class *in advance* of each day's lecture.

They will actively participate in recitation discussion and activities, and in lecture when called on: plan to make knowledge-building contributions, demonstrate active thought and sustained focus, and contribute to your peers' understandings.

They will serve as discussion leaders for leading one recitation (either alone or in teams). This will include producing a one page handout that identifies key concepts, selects key passages, and frames questions for discussion -- bring paper copies for everyone in recitation.

For the midterm, they will write a five page essay based on readings for this class.

The in-class final exam will require students to explain and connect concepts from the semester using short and long answer questions.

Evaluation

Participation (recitation/lecture): 20% !

Leading discussion (recitation): 20% !

Midterm essay (due October 26 in recitation): 30% !

Final exam (December 18): 30% !

Evaluation 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 and/or incomplete assignments !

A = 94-100
A- = 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76
C- = 70-73
D+ = 65-69
D = 60-64
F = 0-59

Course Policies

Absences and Lateness

More than two unexcused absences will automatically result in a lower grade. Chronic lateness will also be reflected in your evaluation of participation. Regardless of the reason for your absence you will be responsible for any missed work. Travel arrangements do not constitute a valid excuse for rescheduling exams. There are no extra credit assignments for this class.

Format

Please type and double-space your written work. Typing improves the clarity and readability of your work and double-spacing allows room for me to comment. Please also number and staple multiple pages. You are free to use your preferred citation style. Please use it consistently throughout your writing. If sending a document electronically, please name the file in the following format Yourlastname Coursenumber Assignment1.doc

Grade Appeals

Please allow two days to pass before you submit a grade appeal. This gives you time to reflect on my assessment. If you still want to appeal your grade, please submit a short but considered paragraph detailing your concerns. Based on this paragraph I will review the question and either augment your grade or refine my explanation for the lost points.

General Decorum

Slipping in late or leaving early, sleeping, text messaging, using the Internet, doing homework in class, eating, etc. are distracting and disrespectful to all participants in the course.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity

The relationship between students and faculty is the keystone of the educational experience at New York University in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. This relationship takes an honor code for granted and mutual trust, respect, and responsibility as foundational requirements. Thus, how you learn is as important as what you learn. A university education aims not only to produce high-quality scholars, but to also cultivate honorable citizens.

Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do, from taking exams to 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.

You violate the principle of academic integrity when you cheat on an exam, submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from your professors, receive help on a take-home examination that calls for independent work, or plagiarize.

Plagiarism, one of the gravest forms of academic dishonesty in university life, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. In a community of scholars, whose members are teaching, learning, and discovering knowledge, plagiarism cannot be tolerated.

Plagiarism is failure to properly assign authorship to a paper, a document, an oral presentation, a musical score, and/or other materials that are not your original work. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following: copy verbatim from a book, an article, or other media; download documents from the Internet; purchase documents; report from other's oral work; paraphrase or restate someone else's facts, analysis, and/or conclusions; or copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you.

Your professors are responsible for helping you to understand other people's ideas, to use resources and conscientiously acknowledge them, and to develop and clarify your own thinking. You should know what constitutes good and honest scholarship, style guide preferences, and formats for assignments for each of your courses. Consult your professors for help with problems related to fulfilling course assignments, including questions related to attribution of sources.

Through reading, writing, and discussion, you will undoubtedly acquire ideas from others, and exchange ideas and opinions with others, including your classmates and professors. You will be expected, and often required, to build your own work on that of other people. In so doing, you are expected to credit those sources that have contributed to the development of your ideas.

Avoiding Academic Dishonesty

- Organize your time appropriately to avoid undue pressure, and acquire good study habits, including note taking.
- Learn proper forms of citation. Always check with your professors of record for their preferred style guides. Directly copied material must always be in quotes; paraphrased material must be acknowledged; even ideas and organization derived from your own previous work or another's work need to be acknowledged.
- Always proofread your finished work to be sure that quotation marks, footnotes and other references were not inadvertently omitted. Know the source of each citation.
- Do not submit the same work for more than one class without first obtaining the permission of both professors even if you believe that work you have already completed satisfies the requirements of another assignment.
- Save your notes and drafts of your papers as evidence of your original work.

Disciplinary Sanctions

When a professor suspects cheating, plagiarism, and/or other forms of academic dishonesty, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken following the department procedure or through referral to the Committee on Student Discipline.

The Steinhardt School Statement on Academic Integrity is consistent with the New York University Policy on Student Conduct, published in the NYU Student Guide.

Student Resources

- Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.
- Writing Center (Washington Square): 411 Lafayette, 4th Floor. Schedule an ! appointment online at <https://nyu.mywconline.com> or just walk-in. !

My Accountability to You and Us to Each Other

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, (a)sexual orientation, (a)gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, immigration status, language, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or (a)gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Schedule of Classes, Readings, and Assignments

Week 1 – Introduction

September 4: Introduction to MCC 1

September 6: Peters, John Durham / "Mass Media"

Week 2 – Medium and Media

September 11: Plato / *Protagoras*, 316a-328d

September 13: McLuhan, Marshall / "The Medium is the Message"

Week 3 – Images and Visual Culture

September 18: Sturken, Marita and Lisa Cartwright / "Images, Power, and Politics," pages 1-16

September 20: Sturken, Marita and Lisa Cartwright / "Images, Power, and Politics," pages 17-36

Week 4 – Languages and Codes

September 25: Wittgenstein, Ludwig / "Philosophical Investigations," notes 1-23, 65-71

September 27: Orwell, George / "Politics and the English Language"

Week 5 – Mediation and Control

October 2: Foucault, Michel / "Panopticism"

October 4: Deleuze, Gilles / "Postscript on the Societies of Control"

Week 6 – Imagined Communities

October 9: No class (legislative day)

October 11: Tufekci, Zeynep / *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*, chapter 1

Week 7 – Truth and Power

October 16: Arendt, Hannah / "Truth and Politics"

October 18: Hall, Stuart / "Encoding, Decoding"

Week 8 – Propaganda and Mass Media

October 23: Katz, Elihu and Paul Lazarsfeld / "Personal Influence"

October 25: Miller, Mark Crispin / "Introduction," *Propaganda* (Edward Bernays, 1928)

Midterm Essay due in recitation on Friday, October 26

Week 9 – Media and Experience

October 30: Benjamin, Walter / "The Storyteller"

November 1: Benjamin, Walter / "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

Week 10 – Sensibility, Taste, and Class

November 6: Sontag, Susan / "Notes on 'Camp'"

November 8: Bourdieu, Pierre / "Distinction and the Aristocracy of Culture"

Week 11 – Technologies of Duplication and Distribution

November 13: Gitelman, Lisa / "Xerographers of the Mind"

November 15: Nakamura, Lisa and Cassius Adair / "The Digital Afterlives of 'This Bridge Called My Back'" !

Week 12 – Private and Public Media !

November 20: Brunton, Finn and Helen Nissenbaum / "Vernacular Resistance to Data Collection and Analysis: A Political Theory of Obfuscation"

November 22: No class (Thanksgiving)

Week 13 – Digital Media: Intelligence and Networks

November 27: Crawford, Kate / "Can an Algorithm Be Agonistic? Scenes of Contest in Calculated Publics"

November 29: boyd, danah / "Social Network Sites as Networked Publics: Affordances, Dynamics, and Implications"

Week 14 – Digital Media: Utopias and Dystopias

December 4: Swartz, Lana / "Blockchain Dreams: Imagining Techno-Economic Alternatives After Bitcoin"

December 6: Schüll, Natasha / "Gambled Away: Video Poker and Self-Suspension"

Week 15 – Portraying the Future

December 11: No reading. In class screening: Marker, Chris / *La Jetée*

December 13: Conclusions, review, and the future

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 18, 8:00-9:50 AM in the Cantor Film Center (no exceptions)