
INTRO TO MEDIA & COMMUNICATION STUDIES in Fall 2020 (CM1023B)

Course Code	CM1023B	Professor(s)	Noémie Zofia Oxley
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	Grenelle, 3rd floor
Class Schedule	M: 10:50-12:25 in Q-A101 R: 12:40-14:15 in C-103	Office Hours	By appt.
Credits	4	Email	noxley@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

Introduction to Media and Communication Studies introduces students to some of the basic concepts and considerations informing the critical analysis of media and culture, especially that of film and television. As a “gateway” course required for upper level communication and media studies courses, this course will familiarize you with the issues, concepts, and research areas of media and communication studies. Our focus will be on preparing you to critically engage media, not merely to appreciate it or to produce it.

We will begin our exploration of the basic concepts and issues in media criticism by examining the contexts within which media is produced and consumed and the extent to which those contexts influence the range of possibilities for what a media text might “mean” or do. We will be attentive to relationships of power and how such relationships inform the production and distribution of media texts, and the importance of considering these relationships when approaching media. Based upon that investigation, we will move into a study of how the formal and stylistic components of film and television texts influence their possible range of meanings. You will learn how to discern and describe the formal characteristics of film and television texts in ways that enhance your ability to understand the cultural and ideological work they do. As we study the aesthetic and generic components of news, film, television, and internet texts, we will remain attentive to the ways that they always are made to mean in specific contexts and the ways that they inform our understandings of the world and ourselves. Throughout the course, students should expect to be challenged to think differently about things that previously might have seemed “natural” or “obvious” to them.

Through lectures, discussions, exams, quizzes, and in-class and take-home exercises, students will learn the basic concepts in the field of media studies, which will prepare them for more advanced discussions and papers in upper-level communications courses and for a more reflexive, critically empowered relationship with media in their everyday lives.

Course Learning Outcomes

Have a conceptual vocabulary for understanding formal/compositional aspects of media.

Have a critical-theoretical vocabulary for critically analyzing media artifacts, media's role in social processes, and media businesses.

Understand different aspects of the field of media and communications (e.g.. Film, Audience studies, semiotics, narrative and genre analysis, political economy of media, cultural studies, journalism and political communication, advertising).

General Education

The general education program at AUP consists of four requirements: Speaking the World, Modeling the World, Mapping the World, and Comparing Worlds Past and Present.

Course Outline

A.??? MEANINGS AND SIGNS

September

Week I – 23rd – 25th

Thursday 23rd – Session II

Topics: *Introduction to the course; what makes a good class*

Week II – 28th – 2nd

Monday 28th – Session I

Topics: How to read for this class

Reading: James Carey, Communication as Culture, 11-17; B&S, Semiotics, 9-18

Thursday 1st – Session II

Topics: Semiotics

Reading: Roland Barthes: Rhetoric of an Image. Recommended:

http://www.uvm.edu/~tstreete/semiotics_and_ads/index.html and the Grammar of Audio-Visual Media. Analysis through production: <http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/short/gramtv.html>

October

Week III – 5th – 9th

Monday 5th – Session I

Topics: Ideology.

Reading: B&S, pp. 173-193; Zizek, “The Pervert’s Guide to Ideology”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVwKjGbz60k>

Thursday 8th – Session II

Ideology case study workshop and short presentations.

B. Narrative, Genre and Representation

Week IV –12th – 16th

Monday 12th – Session I:

Topics: Narratives

Reading: B&S, 42-65

Thursday 15th – Session II

Narratives Creative project presentations – for this presentation, you will construct your own narrative.

Week V –19th – 23rd

Monday 19th – Session I

Topics: Genre(s)

Reading: B&S, pp 74-97; Deade, “Movie Genres That Make the Most Money”

<https://www.investopedia.com/financial-edge/0410/movie-genres-with-the-best-roi.aspx>

Thursday 22nd – Session II

Topics: Genre and Gender

Reading: Linda Williams, "Body Genres"

Week VI – 26th – 30th

Monday 26th – Session I

Topics: Representation

Reading: B&S. pp. 106-137

Thursday 29th – Session II

Topics: Documentary and Reality

Reading: Bill Nichols, "What Makes a good documentary"

October 28th, Mid-Semester

November

Week VII – 2nd – 6th

Monday 2nd – Session I

Topics: Reality TV

Reading: Choose between J. McIntyre “Transgender idol: Queer subjectivities and Australian reality TV” and S. Sarpong, “Pushing the Boundary: are Reality TV Shows Ruffling Feathers in Africa?”

Thursday 5th – Session II

Midterm Exam

C. INSTITUTIONS AND INDUSTRIES

Week VIII - 9th – 13th

Monday 9th – Session I

Topics: Media Globalization.

Reading: B&S, pp. 144-160

November 11th to 13th, fall break (no classes)

Week IX - 16th – 20th

Monday 16th – Session II

Topics: Media as business: Political Economy of the media

Reading: Peter Wilking, *The Political Economy of Global Communication*, an Introduction (excerpts).

Thursday 19th – Session II

Topics: Music Industries

Reading: B&S, pp. 228-236

Week X – 23rd – 27th

Monday 23rd – Session I

Topics: Branding

Reading: B&S, pp. 309-322; “Fukuppy? Really? Here are our Top Five Marketing Fails”: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/oct/16/fukuppy-five-marketing-fails-japanese-company>

Thursday 26th – Session II

Topics: From advertising to influencers: Instagram, a case study

Reading: Sarah Banet-Weiser, “Branding the authentic”, ch. 2

November 27th, last day to withdraw from a course,

last day to choose the credit/no credit option

Week XI – 30th – 4th

Monday 30th – Session I

Topics: Media Convergence and the digital Revolution

Reading: Henry Jenkins, “Media Convergence”

Thursday 3rd – Session II

Topics: The public Sphere in an era of algorithms

Reading: L. Reed & D. Boyd, “Who Controls the Public Sphere in an era of algorithms”

December

Week XIII – 7th – 11th

Monday 7th– Session I

Topics: Fox News, “Fair and Balanced”

Reading: Quizz on Fox News. To prepare, watch episode 2 of *The Loudest Voice* and Chris Wallace’s interview of Jon

Stewart:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYbtUztVctI&list=PLB7Vs4VeamfnfLGuq9pXLJ6Qxws5DYhWR&index=77&t=0s>

Thursday 10th – Session II

Topics: Conclusion to the course

Conclusion presentations: MEDIA TODAY – choose a case study/a concept studied in class and explain in a short presentation why it is fundamental to understand media today

December 11th, last day of classes,

December 12th - 15th, reading days

December 16th – 22th, Final Exam

January 4nd, all grades due

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

CONDUCT/CLASS POLICY

–Please be courteous and respectful at all times. You may disagree with someone, but please do so politely (a good way to start is by saying “I can see your point”). Make sure you attempt to understand each other before you contribute to the discussion.

–Please use restroom **before class**, except in an emergency (routine departures in the middle of the class are unacceptable). Frequent departures and arrivals *distract* the flow of class each time they happen. That said, of course emergencies happen.

–**Avoid conversations with people sitting around you.** They are distracting to all those around you.

–**You must check your AUP email once per day for important announcements.**

–**NO CELL PHONES ALLOWED DURING CLASS.**

–**Laptops and other electronic devices: Laptops are only allowed in class for specific researches. Bring pen and paper!**

FYI, research says that electronic devices (including laptops) in the classroom often impede learning. So why not taking notes on paper??

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hot-thought/201007/banning-laptops-in-classrooms-0>

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/take-notes-by-hand-for-better-long-term-comprehension.html>

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for

example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and *especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.*

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY STATEMENT

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments.

Grading Policy

- **In-class or online participation through chat conversation:** You are expected to engage class discussion frequently and constructively. This requires not only keeping up with assigned readings, but also thinking critically about the ideas and examples at hand. You will need to contribute to every class class through comments or questions, whether orally or through the chat conversation on Teams' platform. **10%**

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- **In-class weekly quizzes on visual or reading material; homework:** Once a week class will begin with a 5 minutes quiz available on Teams, involving 2 or three short questions on the material given beforehand; Once a week students will respond to one or two questions posted on Teams' collaborative space. **10%**
 - **A-synchronous and in-class/online presentations:** 2 group presentations will be organized throughout the semester, focusing on specific case studies (films, books, videos, photographs on war). The first one will take place live and the other one will be recorded through teams or other video-devices by students. **30%**
 - **Mid-term exam. 20%**
 - **Final paper:** Undertake a detailed analysis (2000-2500 words max) of a war representation of your choice by using the readings and the theories seen in class. This final paper can be written collaboratively.

Other
