
INTRO TO MEDIA & COMMUNICATION STUDIES in Spring 2021 (CM1023A)

Course Code	CM1023A	Professor(s)	Jessica Feldman
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	305 Grenelle
Class Schedule	M: 13:45-15:05 in C-102 R: 09:00-10:20 in C-102	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	4	Email	jfeldman@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

As a “gateway” course required for upper level communication and media studies courses, CM1023 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

Course Outline

January

Week I

Monday 18

INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

Thursday 21

How to read for this class

James Carey, Communication as Culture, 11-17; BnS, Semiotics, 9-18. (both on Blackboard)

In-class, “open-book” quiz based on the readings. Don’t panic!

Week II

Monday 25

(for attendance you must turn in signed last page of syllabus, last page below)

Semiotics, Structuralism, Content Analysis, 19-30

Thursday 28

Textual Analysis, Applications, cases 32-41

February

Week III

Monday 1

The 'Grammar' of Audio-Visual Media: analysis through production

read: <http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/short/gramtv.html>

Thursday 4

Narratives, 42-62

Week IV

Monday 8

NO CLASSES

Thursday 11

Applying Narrative Theories, 66-73.

Week V

Monday 15

In-class Exercise and Quiz (see blackboard)

Thursday 18

Genre and other classifications, 74-95

Week VI

Monday 22

Ideologies and Discourses, 172-192

Thursday 26

NO CLASSES

March

Week VII

Monday 1

Representation: Stereotypes, Scripts, Performance, 106-126

Thursday 4

Week VIII

Monday 8

Midterm Review Quiz Show

Thursday 11

Midterm

Week IX

Monday 15

Ideology and Representation Cases and Applications, 129-137, and 194-203

Thursday 18

Documentary and Reality Debates: 358-376

March 19

Mid-semester grades due

Week X

Monday 22

Audiences and Users: 379-402

Thursday 25

Globalisation, 138-161

Week XI

Monday 29

Globalisation cases and debates, 163-171

April

Thursday 1

News and its Futures, 334-355

WEEK XI

Monday 5

NO CLASS

Thursday 8

Media as Business 204-226

Week XII

Monday 12

Music and Film Industry Cases, 228-236

Thursday 15

Advertising, Branding, Celebrity I: 309-320;

Week XIII

Monday 19

Introduction to Rhetoric and Persuasion, Herrick pdf

Thursday 22

Berger, on Publicity, from *Ways of Seeing*

WEEK XIV

Monday 26 (Last Class)

Final Exam Quiz Show!

Hand in participation contract

FINAL EXAM

Monday May 3: 6:30-9 PM

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES:

IN THIS CLASS YOU ARE ALLOWED TWO UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. AFTER four absences, EACH UNEXCUSED ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN ONE-HALF LETTER GRADE REDUCTION: E.G., A BECOMES B+, ETC.

Lateness: Everyone, including the professor, will likely have an occasion where something happens (e.g., an important phone call, emergencies, etc.) that causes an unavoidable late arrival to class. However, lateness is not repetitive, or it will affect your grade (you can't get participation credit, obviously, if you're not in class).

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.

Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are STILL EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example, when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

Grading Policy

GRADING: Note: if you don't have a laptop for in-class quizzes and exams, please see me in

Midterm 30%

Final 35% (cumulative)

Participation (see page 3 below) 15% (Note: simply being present is not enough for a participation grade, and when you are absent you get a 0 for participation); Please **check AUP email** responsible for any announcements you miss there, which may impact preparation for participation.

Quizzes 20% (THESE WILL BE TAKEN ON LAPTOP/BLACKBOARD SITE IN CLASS)

- Extra credit quiz(zes) can substitute for lower quiz grade(s)
- If you have a question about a quiz or test after it starts, please ask me, not someone else. Your professor has no idea whether your communication is an attempt to cheat or a question about something else confusing.

NOTE: Please DO NOT ASK FOR AN ALTERNATIVE MIDTERM OR FINAL TIME BECAUSE YOU HAVE MADE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS THAT CONFLICT WITH THE EXAM DATE. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK EXAM DATES BEFORE BOOKING TRAVEL.

Grading Scale:

- A+: 97-100% (A+ appears as A on transcript)
- A: 93-96.9%
- A-: 90-92.9%
- B+: 87-89.9%
- B: 83-87.9%
- B-: 80-82.9%
- C+: 77-79.9%
- C: 70-76.9%
- D: 60-69.9%
- F: 0-59.9%

Other

Note: Laptops and Phones

This class requires your full attention. Your portable phones and computers should be off and during this class. You will be asked to leave if you are found in violation of this course policy, considered absent for that day.

Why do I have this policy? For you as much as for me:

- <https://news.utexas.edu/2017/06/26/the-mere-presence-of-your-smartphone-reduces-brain-po>
- <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-l-comprehension.html>
- https://www.huffingtonpost.com/naomi-s-baron/read-on-screen-learning_b_6681500.html

TEXTBOOKS:

REQUIRED:

Branston G. and Stafford R. *The Media Student's Handbook*

Various blackboard and internet readings, and handouts

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT:

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentation. AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. Professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the Language Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, when completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses.

Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct

Please see page 25 of your student handbook: <https://www.aup.edu/sites/default/files/widget-download/file/AUP%20Student%20Handbook%202017-2018.pdf>

From the Student Handbook: "A number of actions comprise academic integrity and honesty and they all require your responsibility for your own work, citing sources responsibly, and attributing any borrowed materials in a proper way. The most egregious examples of academic misconduct include plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating. Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity are serious and can lead to failing grades or dismissal from the University. The University of Paris is committed to maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity."

topic requires a few examples and explanations to provide clarity.”