
MFJS 2210: INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA & CULTURE

Mass Communication Building 119, 10:00 – 11:50 a.m., M & W

Winter Quarter, 2012

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

MFJS 2210, Introduction to Media and Culture, is an introductory course in communication, designed for students interested in studying the media. It focuses on economic, political and cultural roles of media in our society. In the course, we will explore the historical development and current structure of the media and examine the history of the study of communication and the different conceptual models for describing and understanding communication. We will also discuss the process of creating, distributing, and exhibiting media content. The course will emphasize the influence of technology, corporatization and globalization on the media, as well as discuss the legal and ethical issues facing today's media outlets. The course satisfies the University of Denver's Scientific Inquiry requirement.

OBJECTIVES

In this course students will:

- **Learn the history and current structure of the media.**
- **Recognize current issues influencing the rapidly changing media environment.**
- **Describe and articulate basic principles relating to media and culture.**
- **Learn to articulate concepts and principles specific to the study of media and culture.**
- **Describe and explain how social scientific methods are used to understand media and culture.**
- **Complete three assignments designed to examine and familiarize students with the current research methods used to study and understand the media.**

REQUIRED TEXTS

Pavlik, John V., & Shawn McIntosh (2011). *Converging Media: A New Introduction to Mass Communication* (Second Edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

BLACKBOARD WEBSITE

This course uses the Blackboard Website that the University of Denver provides. The Blackboard site is a crucial resource for this course, and you will need to access it frequently. To do so, go to <http://blackboard.du.edu/>. From this page, click the login button, and then enter your username and password. You will then enter the Blackboard site, where any course you are taking that uses the Blackboard system will be listed.

You will find important course materials posted on the BB site: the syllabus (with links to Web-based readings); PowerPoint slides from class lectures; and other important materials, such as exam study guides. Be sure you know how to access your account.

READINGS, ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION POLICY

Class attendance is essential because this course is designed as a lecture/seminar in which all students are active participants. This is not a course for students who do not want to attend or contribute to class.

Attendance will be taken at the start of every class. During the course each student will be permitted three (3) absences for whatever reason (job interview, sickness, family commitments, ski days, etc.). I do not require any advanced notice of your absence nor explanation when you return. There will be no additional “excused absences” beyond these three. For each absence in excess of three, regardless of the reason, your final score in the class will be reduced by one point. A tardy will count as ½ of an absence as will leaving class early.

View your three free absences as the sick leave and personal days generally allowed employees in a work environment. In the workforce, employees who use up all their sick leave and personal days and then find themselves obliged to take off additional time do so without pay. Having your grade reduced is the equivalent to “unpaid leave.”

In addition, all reading assignments should be completed *before* the class period during which we will discuss a particular topic. *You may be called on in class to answer questions related to the day’s readings. This is true even if you do not volunteer to answer the question.* In sum, it will be extremely difficult for you to follow the lectures, participate in the discussion, respond to my questions, and ask intelligent questions of your own if you come to class inadequately prepared. Attendance at lectures and *informed* participation in discussion are essential to doing well in this class.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

In this course, you will be able to earn points in a number of ways. You will be awarded points based on class participation, three written assignments (2-3 pages double-spaced, with 12-point font) and three exams. Written assignments are due in hard copy (printed and stapled) on the date specified on the schedule, at the beginning of class.

Late assignments will *not* be accepted except in extraordinary circumstances and only with the prior written agreement of the professor. In such cases, your paper will be downgraded by a full letter grade for each 24-hour period past the original deadline.

Final grades in this course will be based on evaluation of three exams, two written assignments and class preparation and participation.

Class participation	10%
Written assignments	20%
Exam One	20%
Exam Two	20%
Final Exam	30%

The alpha/numeric conversion for course grades is as follows:

A = 93-100 A- = 90-92 B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86 B- = 80-82 C+ = 77-79
C = 73-76 C- = 70-72 D+ = 67-69 D = 60-66 F = below 60

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any students with disabilities should contact the Disability Services Program to determine whether and to what extent services or accommodations are required for this course. If you think this notice might apply to you, please contact the Department of Disability Services at 303-871-2278 or visit the program's website at: <http://www.du.edu/disability/dsp/>

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER HONOR CODE

All members of the University of Denver are expected to uphold the values of *Integrity, Respect,* and *Responsibility*. These values embody the standards of conduct for students, staff, faculty, and administrators as members of the University community. The *Honor Code* is designed so that responsibility for upholding these principles lies with the individual as well as the entire community.

The *Honor Code* fosters and advances an environment of ethical conduct in the academic community of the University, the foundation of which includes the pursuit of academic honesty and integrity. Through an atmosphere of mutual respect we enhance the value of our education and bring forth the highest standard of academic excellence. Members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, administrators and trustees,

must not commit any intentional misrepresentation or deception in academic or professional matters.

Violations of these policies include, but are not limited to:

- **Plagiarism**, including any representation of another's work or ideas as one's own in academic and educational submissions.
- **Cheating**, including any actual or attempted use of resources not authorized by the instructor(s) for academic submissions.
- **Fabrication**, including any falsification or creation of data, research or resources to support academic submissions.

The *University of Denver Honor Code Procedures Governing Students*, available at www.du.edu/honorcode, shall govern and be followed in the case of any student at the University who is accused of violating the *Honor Code*.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

CM = *Converging Media*

www = a reading available from a website; BB= a reading available on our course
Blackboard site

WEEK I

W: 1/04 Introduction & Syllabus

BB: Syllabus

www: "Journalism, Satire, or Just Laughs? 'The Daily Show with John Stewart' Examined," available at

<http://www.journalism.org/node/10953>

www: Arthur S. Brisbane, "In an Age of Voices, Moving Beyond the Facts," *New York Times*, September 4, 2010, available at

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/05/opinion/05pubed.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

WEEK II

M: 1/09 Media and Culture

CM: Chapter 1

www: *Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-year-olds*, Kaiser Family Foundation, available at

<http://www.kff.org/entmedia/upload/8010.pdf>, pp. 1-5

www: *Teens and Social Media*, Pew Internet and American Life Project,

http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2007/PIPs_Teens_Social_Media_Final.pdf, pp. i-iv

W: 1/11 Media Literacy and Media Ethics

CM: Chapter 2

WEEK III

M: 1/16 MLK Holiday, no class

W: 1/18 Guest Speakers

Jim Conway, Television writer and producer

Joe Pennella, Television cinematographer

MEDIA DIARY DUE

WEEK IV

M: 1/23 Ownership and Regulation of the Media

CM: Chapter 14

W: 1/25 Media Theories & Research
CM: Chapter 13

WEEK V

M: 1/30 EXAM ONE

W: 2/1 Journalism
CM: Chapter 10

WEEK VI

M: 2/6 Guest speaker
Jim Clarke, Chief of Bureau, The Associated Press, Colorado,
Montana, Utah and Wyoming

AGENDA SETTING ASSIGNMENT DUE

W: 2/8 Print Media: Books, Newspapers & Magazines
CM: Chapter 4

WEEK VII

M: 2/13 Audio Media: Music & Radio Industries
CM: Chapter 5

W: 2/15 Visual Media: Movies & Television
CM: Chapter 6

WEEK VIII

M: 2/20 EXAM TWO

W: 2/22 Strategic Communication: Advertising
CM: Chapter 12
www: [“Top Ten Tasteless Ads.”](#) *Time Online*. Begin at number
one and be sure to click through all ten advertisements. Note:
Some of the advertisements are videos.

WEEK IX

M: 2/27 Strategic Communication: Public Relations
CM: Chapter 12 (cont'd)

W: 2/29 **Digital Media**
CM: Chapter 3 & 7

WEEK X

M: 3/5 **Networks & Social Media**
CM: Chapters 8 & 9

W: 3/7 **Guest speakers**
Brian McGowan, NBC Advertising Account Executive, national advertising for news programming
Steve Corman, Producer/writer, NBC/PBS news, 8 time Emmy winner

WEEK XI

M: 3/12 **Media and Politics, Course wrap-up & instructor evaluations**
CM: Chapter 15

FINAL EXAM—WEDNESDAY 3/14/2012 10:00-11:50 AM