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# COMM401: MEDIA & CULTURAL POLICY

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## Course Summary

The term "media policy" might suggest the narrow legal or bureaucratic framework within which media are regulated. Looked at more broadly, however, media policy is really about a series of struggles over technology, economics, political power, cultural meaning, and social values. These struggles are waged among a range of institutional and individual actors with different interests and varying degrees of cultural influence.

Looked at even more broadly, media policy is part of our cultural policy--how we as a society organize and structure our cultural selves. And that, in turn, forces us to ask: What kind of society do we want to have? What values and principles will we prioritize? What modes of meaning-making will we support, discourage, finance, repress, reward, or censure? In other words, what should our culture do and how can we best get it to do that?

This course will examine a range of policy questions and issues--historical, contemporary, and future--with an emphasis on their legal, technological, economic, political, cultural, and social dimensions (not necessarily in that order of importance!). In each case, we will seek to understand media policy in terms of how we got the cultural system we have today and how we might think about the cultural system (and society) we want tomorrow.

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## Required Text

Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, eds. *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2003 (available at the book store).

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## Assignments

All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Late assignments will be penalized ½ grade per day .

Discussion Questions	10%
Class Summaries	10%
Media Interview	10%
Midterm Exam (2/27-3/3):	20%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Final Paper:	30%
Class Participation:	10%

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## Discussion Questions

Roughly once every two weeks, you are required to write two discussion questions derived from the readings for that class period. The dates for which you have questions due will be assigned on the first day of class. **Questions must be emailed to me at [kirkpatrickb@denison.edu](mailto:kirkpatrickb@denison.edu) by 8:00 p.m. the night before class.** These questions will be graded as ✓+, ✓, or ✓- and cumulatively comprise 10% of your final grade. Questions submitted after 8:00 p.m. will receive no credit, but you may get feedback on them (time permitting).

These questions should demonstrate your ability to grapple with the material, think about it, connect it to other things we've read or discussed, apply it to issues beyond the scope of that particular reading, and generate points that are worth further consideration. A good discussion question forces us to confront the assumptions and implications of our arguments and decisions.

Sample of a ✓+ question, from a set of readings about copyright policy:

*Both articles address problems regarding copyright and both are critical of current copyright policy. For example, Ward argues that it is very difficult for small companies to compete in the market because of overly restrictive intellectual property provisions, which raises the relationship of copyright policy to the smooth functioning of a fair and free market. Davis argues that artists are also hurt by current IP laws, which suggests that the current system is neither economically nor culturally optimal. So how do we prioritize the competing values of fostering creativity, ensuring free and fair competition, and rewarding successful creators? Can we strike a balance among these three important considerations, and what policy tools do we have to achieve (or at least approach) that balance? Finally, as we read in the Benton Headlines, the RIAA is now arguing that even ripping a CD to one's computer violates copyright: in the face of such nonsensical and antisocial copyright claims on the part of IP holders, is civil disobedience (e.g. P2P filesharing) morally justified? Lessig seems to think not; what does the class think?*

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## Class Summaries

At the end of each class, you will have 5-10 minutes to write class summaries of that day's discussion. These will be assigned only on days on which we have had time to substantively discuss issues. The form will vary, but all of them will require that you have paid close attention to class discussion, taken notes, and thoughtfully engaged with the material. These summaries will be graded as ✓+, ✓, or ✓- and cumulatively comprise 10% of your final grade. For obvious reasons, if you are absent, you will receive a zero on that day's summary. However, I will drop the lowest two summary grades before calculating your semester grade for this area of the course (i.e., you have two "freebies").

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## Policies and Expectations

Attendance: Your attendance and participation are integral to the success of the course as well as your own personal achievement. I will be taking attendance daily, and missing class or failing to participate constructively will definitely impact your class participation grade.

Lateness: Be in your seat and ready to begin class at the scheduled start time. I am much more strict about lateness than absenteeism: I would rather you not come to class at all than interrupt your classmates by showing up late.

Preparation: Always bring that day's readings to class with you. The syllabus will always state clearly what you should read prior to each class, which assignments you should hand in, and what else you must do or bring for a given day. Late assignments will be penalized by a half-grade for each 24 hours of lateness (e.g. from B+ to B). If you know that you will have difficulty completing an assignment on time, let me know before the deadline and I will try to work with you if possible.

Written Work: All written work prepared outside of class must be typed (double-spaced), spellchecked, and proofread. Failure to run your work through a spellchecker (one more time before printing is a good idea) will automatically result in a 5% deduction from your grade for that assignment. Multiple-page documents must be stapled—I will not accept unstapled work (please note that paper clips and dog-ears are *not* staples). I also will not accept assignments by email under any circumstances—you must hand in a hard copy of the assignment on the due date in order to avoid a late penalty.

Grades: All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade. The calculation of your grade will be based on a 1,000-point scale, and the weight of each assignment is listed above. If you are concerned about your grade, come talk to me as early as possible.

In-Class Behavior: You may not eat in class unless you bring enough for everyone (beverages are okay). You may not use computers in class without prior approval. Your cell phone or PDA must be turned off and put away during class. Points will be deducted from your participation grade if your phone rings, or if I notice you using your cell phone or PDA during class. If you absolutely need to have your phone on during class, talk to me at the beginning of the semester.

Email Policy: I will regularly use email to send out announcements, changes in the syllabus, reminders about tests or due dates, etc. It is your responsibility to check your email regularly to keep up-to-date with these announcements. I will use the email address you have listed with the university; therefore, please make sure that this is indeed the correct address. I promise to answer all email from students within 24 hours (36 hours on weekends) and will hold you responsible for any announcements made via email within 24 hours of the announced change (36 hours on weekends). I will not accept assignments via email under any circumstances.

Accessibility and Special Accommodations: It is important that the course be accessible to all students. If you need any alternative accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or evaluation procedures in order for you to be able to participate fully in the course, or if there are any external issues that may affect your work in this course, please contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss your specific needs. I rely on the Academic Support & Enrichment Center in 102 Doane to verify the need for reasonable accommodations based on documentation on file in that office.

Academic Honesty: You may not turn in substantially similar work to two classes without the express consent of *both* instructors. All sources in your written work must be properly cited; if you have any doubts about correct citation while writing your paper, contact the Writing Center or any of the many paper and online guides to academic citation. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated, and students found to have committed plagiarism, ***regardless of whether or not the plagiarism was committed intentionally and knowingly***, will face severe grade penalties and will also be reported to the university to face further academic discipline. You are encouraged to use the resources available in the library system and the Writing Center to guide your research.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed by that day's class, and you should come prepared to discuss them.

Those that are not from the textbook (L&M) are marked as either on electronic reserve (e-res) or on Blackboard (BB).

Full citations for all articles will be available on Blackboard.

♣♦♠♥ = Discussion questions from that group due to kirkpatrickb@denison.edu on the previous evening by 8:00 p.m.  
(EC=no questions due from any group but you may submit a set for extra credit or to make up ones you missed.)

*Every single thing on this syllabus is subject to change, so check your email for announcements and keep on your toes.*

### UNIT ONE: SOME FOUNDATIONS

Jan. 14		<b><u>Foundations I: Media and Culture and Policy and You</u></b>	
Jan. 16	♣	<b><u>Foundations II: Liberalism, Corporate Liberalism</u></b>	Streeter, <i>Selling the Air</i> , 22-58 (e-res)
Jan. 23	♦	<b><u>Foundations III: Liberalism, Neoliberalism</u></b>	Shah, "A Primer on Neoliberalism" (BB) Sunstein, <i>Free Markets and Social Justice</i> , 3-9 (e-res) Sterba, "Toulmin to Rawls," 1-2 (BB)
Jan. 28	♠	<b><u>Foundations IV: Media Policy, Cultural Policy</u></b>	Lewis and Miller, "Introduction" (L&M 1-9) McGuigan, "Cultural Policy Studies" (L&M 23-38)

### UNIT TWO: SOME KEY CONCEPTS

Jan. 30	♥	<b><u>Key Concepts I: Citizenship</u></b>	Miller, "What Is Cultural Citizenship?" (e-res)
Feb. 4	♣	<b><u>Key Concepts II: The First Amendment</u></b>	Carter et. al, <i>Mass Communication Law</i> , 1-19 (e-res) Harvey, "Doing it My Way," (L&M 100-113)
Feb. 6	♦	<b><u>Key Concepts III: Censorship</u></b>	Foerstel, "Banned In the Media" (BB) <b><u>NOTE:</u></b> Your interviewee must be approved <i>in writing</i> by today
Feb. 11	♠	<b><u>Key Concepts IV: Obscenity and Indecency</u></b>	Gillmor et al., "Obscenity and Indecency" (e-res) Cenite, "Federalizing or Eliminating Online Obscenity Law" (e-res)
Feb. 13	♥	<b><u>Key Concepts V: The Public Interest</u></b>	Hazlett, "Is the 'Public Interest' in the Public Interest?" (e-res) Davitian, "The Public Convenience and Necessity" (e-res)
Feb. 18	♣	<b><u>Key Concepts VI: IP and Cultural Citizenship</u></b>	McLeod, "Musical Production" (L&M 240-250) Vaidhyanathan, <i>Copyrights and Copywrongs</i> , 17-34 (e-res)

### UNIT THREE: SOME ECONOMIC UNDERPINNINGS

Feb. 20	EC	<b><u>Economics I: Advertising</u></b>	Smulyan, "The Backlash Against Broadcast Advertising" (L&M 55-70) Jhally, "Advertising at the Edge of the Apocalypse" (BB) <b><u>MEDIA INTERVIEW DUE</u></b>
Feb. 25	♦	<b><u>Economics II: Public Support for Culture</u></b>	Miller, "The National Endowment for the Arts in the 1990s" (e-res) Ouellette, "TV Viewing as Good Citizenship?" (L&M 114-128)
Feb. 27	♠	<b><u>Economics III: Fan Production</u></b>	Jenkins, "Why Heather Can Write" (e-res) <b><u>MIDTERM EXAM HANDED OUT</u></b>

Mar. 3	EC	<b><u>Economics IV:</u></b> <b>Examining the Values in Economic Systems</b>	No reading; in-class screening: Eben Moglen, "Software and Community in the Early 21st Century" <b><u>MIDTERM EXAM DUE</u></b>
Mar. 5	♥	<b><u>Economics V:</u></b> <b>Case Study: The Music Industry</b>	Berland, "Radio Space and Industrial Time" (L&M 230-239) Love, "Courtney Love Does the Math" (BB) Thompson, "Sex, Drugs and Updating Your Blog" (BB) Anderson, "The Long Tail" (BB)

**SPRING BREAK, MAR. 8-MAR. 16**

**UNIT FOUR: SOME MEDIA POLICY ISSUES**

Mar. 17	♣	<b><u>Media Policy Issues I:</u></b> <b>"Deregulation"</b>	Huntemann, "The Effect of Telecommunications Reform" (L&M 71-79)
Mar. 19	♦	<b><u>Media Policy Issues II:</u></b> <b>Media Conglomeration</b>	Compaine, "Does Rupert Murdoch Control the Media?" (e-res) Turner, "My Beef With Big Media" (e-res)
Mar. 24	EC	<b><u>Media Policy Issues III:</u></b> <b>Media Policy, Social Policy</b>	Levine, "Having a Female Body Doesn't Make You Feminine" (e-res) Kim, "Do We Still Need Feminist Media?" (BB) <b><u>ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE</u></b>
Mar. 26	♠	<b><u>Media Policy Issues IV:</u></b> <b>New Technology, New Policy</b>	Streeter, "That Deep Romantic Chasm" (L&M 161-171) Vaidyanathan, "Remote Control" (e-res)
Mar. 31	♥	<b><u>Media Policy Issues V:</u></b> <b>Internet Policy</b>	EFF, "Unintended Consequences: Seven Years Under the DMCA" (BB) Goldsmith and Wu, "Digital Borders" (BB) Yoo and Wu, "Keeping the Internet Neutral?"
Apr. 2	♣	<b><u>Media Policy Issues VI:</u></b> <b>The Digital Transition</b>	Boddy, "The Transition to Digital Broadcasting" (e-res)

**UNIT FIVE: SOME CULTURAL POLICY ISSUES**

Apr. 7	♦	<b><u>Cultural Policy Issues I:</u></b> <b>Economic Development</b>	Florida, "The Rise of the Creative Class" (e-res) "Review Roundtable: Cities and the Creative Class" (e-res)
Apr. 9	♠	<b><u>Cultural Policy Issues II:</u></b> <b>Urban Planning</b>	Comella, "Re-inventing Times Square" (L&M 316-326)
Apr. 14		No Class	
Apr. 16	♥	<b><u>Cultural Policy Issues III:</u></b> <b>Citizens and Consumers</b>	Jackson, "All the World's a Mall" (L&M 327-334) Warner and Berlant, "Sex in Public" (e-res)
Apr. 21	EC	<b><u>Place and Policy V:</u></b> <b>Museums</b>	Bennett, "The Political Rationality of the Museum" (L&M 180-187) Boyer, "The <i>Enola Gay</i> Controversy" (e-res)
Apr. 23	EC	<b><u>Place and Policy VI:</u></b> <b>Sports</b>	Nunn and Rosentraub, "Sports Wars" (L&M 211-224) Programming
Apr. 28		<b><u>Summary</u></b>	No reading <b><u>FINAL PAPER DUE</u></b>