
Communication 147: Media Literacy

Fall, 2016



Instructor: Bill Kirkpatrick
Office: 327 Higley, 587-8512
Office Hours: Monday, 10:30-12:00; Wednesday, 12:00-1:00; or by appointment
Email: kirkpatrickb@denison.edu

Course Summary

While most of us are proficient consumers of visual electronic media – we have the speed of symbol-recognition and comprehension skills to be adept "readers" – few of us have been taught to bring to that reading the critical skills we learn in the study of literature, music, or art. This course examines how sound and images construct the "realities" that media presumably represent.

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to help you acquire new vocabularies and skills of media analysis that will allow you to become a more critical and sophisticated consumer and producer of media. By the end of this class, you should be able to:

- Analyze the elements through which media texts are constructed in order to unpack the social, political, and/or ideological content of those texts.
- Situate your analyses within larger cultural contexts in order to explain how and why that content might matter (politically, culturally, etc.).
- Produce your own media texts with an awareness of the social, political, and/or ideological content of your work, as well as how that work might be interpreted by others.

Required Texts (available at the bookstore)

Grossberg, Lawrence, et al. *Media Making: Mass Media in a Popular Culture* (2nd ed). Sage, 2006.

Smith, Greg. *What Media Classes Really Want to Discuss*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Assignments

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

Midterm	20%	Industrial Analysis	10%
Photoshop Project	10%	Media Critique	30%
Podcast	20%	Class Engagement:	10%

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 engagement grade. You are responsible for all class content from days that you have missed.

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

Engagement: The main responsibilities of creating a productive and enjoyable class rest with you, and that is why class contribution is part of your final course grade (10%). Your active engagement affects not only what you get out of the course but also what your classmates get out of the course. Merely attending class and taking notes is not enough for your success in this class. While you can demonstrate class engagement in ways other than speaking in class (e.g. sending me your thoughts via email; coming to office hours to talk about ideas, not just exam prep; forwarding to me relevant links and items of interest), engagement grades above a B- will be reserved for students who regularly and productively participate in class discussions.

Preparation: Always bring the 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.

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.

Electronics: You may not use computers, iPads, phones, or similar devices in class. Your cell phone must be turned off and put away during class. If you absolutely need to have your phone on during class for some reason, talk to me at the beginning of the semester or the particular class session and we'll work something out.

In-Class Behavior: You may not eat in class (beverages are okay). You may not leave class except in actual emergency situations—please no casual trips to the restroom or water fountain.

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. Except in rare cases of personal or family emergency, 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). Please keep in mind that more involved questions should be asked in office hours, not over email.

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, contact the Writing Center or any of the many paper and online guides to academic citation. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated, *regardless of whether or not the plagiarism was committed intentionally and knowingly.*

Gateway Criteria For Written Work

The following criteria are the bare minimum requirements for all written work you turn in, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the assignment prompt. If any of these criteria are not met, I will stop reading and give you a zero on the assignment. Depending on the assignment, you might be able to revise your work to meet the gateway criteria and hand it back in, at which point a grade penalty will be assessed; if that option is available to you, it will be spelled out in the assignment prompt.

1. The work must be typed in twelve-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides, and double-spaced.
2. Your name and the date of completion must be given at the top unless otherwise specified.
3. If the work is printed out and more than one page, it must be stapled.
4. All citations must be in Chicago full-footnote/bibliography style unless otherwise specified or you make other arrangements with me.
5. The version that you turn in must have been properly spell-checked.
6. If an electronic file, the file name and type must conform to the guidelines for the assignment.
7. The work must adhere to any word counts or page counts given in the prompt unless otherwise authorized.
8. All titles of media works must be formatted correctly according to the following guidelines: italicize titles of books, plays, films, albums, magazines, journals, newspapers, and TV programs; use quotation marks around titles of individual articles, songs, poems, chapter titles, short stories, and TV series episodes.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed by that day's class, and you should come prepared to discuss them. Those not from the books (*MM*= *MediaMaking*; *WMC* = *What Media Classes*) will be on Blackboard.

Everything on this schedule is subject to change, so always check your email and keep on your toes.

UNIT ONE: COMMUNICATION IS CONSTITUTIVE

Sep. 5	Why Study the Media?	<u>Read:</u>	<i>WMC</i> , viii-10; <i>MM</i> , 3-17
Sep. 7	Discourses, Not "Effects"	<u>Read:</u>	<i>WMC</i> , 71-87; Gauntlett, "Ten Things"; <i>MM</i> , 333-5
Sep. 9	Semiotics	<u>Read:</u>	<i>MM</i> , 135-160
Sep. 12	Interpretation	<u>Read:</u>	<i>MM</i> , 161-92
Sep. 14	Ideology	<u>Read:</u>	<i>MM</i> , 193-216
Sep. 16	Consolidation and Practice		
Sep. 19	Technology and Social Change	<u>Read:</u>	<i>MM</i> , 46-51; Carey, "Technology and Ideology"
		<u>Turn In:</u>	Statement of purpose
Sep. 21	Realism	<u>Read:</u>	<i>WMC</i> , 13-34
Sep. 23	Consolidation and Practice		

UNIT TWO: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Sep. 26	Lab I: Pixlr		
Sep. 28	The Image; Mise-en-Scène	<u>Read:</u>	Winston, "The Camera Never Lies"; Morris, "Photography as a Weapon"
Sep. 30	Film Style	<u>Read:</u>	Belton, "Classical Hollywood Cinema: Style"
Oct. 3	Television Style	<u>Read:</u>	Mittell, "Making Meaning," pp. 161-95
Oct. 5	Lab II: GarageBand		
Oct. 7	Sound	<u>Read:</u>	Butler, "Style and Sound"
		<u>Turn In:</u>	Photoshop Assignment
Oct. 10	Stereotypes	<u>Read:</u>	<i>WMC</i> , 88-113
Oct. 12	Reception	<u>Read:</u>	<i>MM</i> , 222-9 and 253-74
Oct. 14	Case Study I	<u>Read:</u>	Wang, "A Struggle of Contending Stories"
		<u>Watch:</u>	<i>Forrest Gump</i>
Oct. 17	Media Economics	<u>Read:</u>	<i>MM</i> , 99-132
Oct. 19	Midterm Exam		

UNIT FIVE: GLOBALIZATION AND DIGITIZATION

Dec. 5	Theories of Globalization	<u>Read:</u>	Wise, "Culture and the Global"
Dec. 7	Media in Global Age I: Media Globalization	<u>Read:</u> <u>Turn In:</u>	MM, 421-455 Industrial Analysis
Dec. 9	Media in Global Age II: Global Media Fandom	<u>Read:</u>	Jenkins, "Pop Cosmopolitanism"
Dec. 12	Digital Media	<u>Read:</u>	Cunningham et al., "YouTube, Multichannel Networks, and the Accelerated Evolution ..."
Dec. 14	Cultural Accessibility	<u>Read:</u>	Elccessor, "Kickstarting Community"
Dec. 16	Summary and wrap-up		

**Final Project (Media Analysis) due Monday, Dec. 19, by 5:00 p.m. to
assignments@billkirkpatrick.net**