University of Northern Iowa
Department of Communication Studies

COMM EM 4646-01 Electronic Media and Culture Fall 2014

Instructor: **Dr. Joyce Chen**
Office: Lang 321
Office Phone: 273-2574
Class Meeting: **TTH 11:00 - 12:15pm,** LNG 308

Office Hours: TTH 2-3 pm
W 12-3 pm
or by appointment

Required Textbook:
Berger, A.A. (2013). Media analysis techniques, (5rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. (MAT)

Pre-requisites: 48E:021, and junior standing.

Course Objectives:
This course examines culture and its interactive relationships to electronic media, society, and individuals. Based on the theories of cultural studies, students will define culture from a number of perspectives, and analyze media products as cultural forms and discuss current media issues **from media culture creator's perspectives**. The cultural theories and research approaches are applicable to film, radio, TV, cable, the Internet, video games, and other visual and social media. Students are encouraged to provide research materials for class discussions, and share media experiences with the class. Through class discussions and assignments, this course will promote creative and critical thinking skills. By the end of this semester, you will:

-- understand the relationship among media text, culture, society, and audience/users;
-- understand the cultural development and cultural differences in various societies and groups;
-- be able to use textual analysis to study media issues in contemporary society;
-- be able to apply the theories of cultural studies to media research and write an academic research paper.

Class Organization:
The class sessions will be organized to emphasize presentations and discussions in order to help students learn basic theoretical and methodological foundation for cultural studies more effectively. I will post discussion questions at the beginning and provide a summary by the end of each class. Since taking this class itself is a cultural practice, the class discussion will require students' active participation. Reading course materials, leading class discussions, and conducting research projects will be your main tasks for achieving the objectives of this course. **In order to effectively integrate theoretical concepts with media analyses and class discussions, please bring textbooks and media product examples with you for class discussions**.

"The University of Northern Iowa is an Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity Institution. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides protection from illegal discrimination for qualified individuals with disabilities. Students with disabilities and other special needs should feel free to contact the instructor if there are services or adaptations that can be made to accommodate specific needs. Check with the Office of Student Disability Services at 103 Student Health Center (273-2677) for further information. Also see http://www.uni.edu/sds/applyingforservices."

Grading:
The grading composition is shown as follows:

Attendance	10%
Literature Review of Media Culture	10%
Short Media Textual Analysis Paper	10%
Individual Meeting	5%
Leading Discussion	10%
Reading & Posting	10%
Quiz X2	10%
Final Research Paper	20%
Final Presentation	5%
Final exam	10%
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Total	100%

The grades will be weighed by the percentages shown above and combined to result in your final course grade. The letter grading scales are shown as follows:

A: >95% A-: 92-94%	B+: 88-91% B: 85-87% B-: 80-84%	C+: 77-79% C: 74-76% C-: 70-73%	D+: 67-69% D: 64-66% D-: 60-63%
F: < 60%			

Assignments:
There are three kinds of assignments: discussions, short papers, and a media research paper. In addition to reading all the materials before coming to the class, you will be assigned a specific chapter from the textbook to present it in the class and lead the class discussion. You will be required to write two short papers for media analyses. You will present your final paper in the class with the format of panel discussion. The requirements for these assignments will be described in handouts.

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date, unless otherwise stated. **The penalty for a late paper is 1 percent deduction for each day late up to 5 percent (i.e. 5 days late). After 5 days late any paper accepted will be graded a "C" as the highest grade for the paper**.

According to University policy, plagiarism will result in **FAILURE** of the course and further **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**. **Plagiarism includes "borrowing" other student's paper or other writer's work, submitting the papers that you wrote for other courses,** referring to Student Academic Ethics Policy http://www.uni.edu/policies/301**.**

Two Short Papers (20%):
The first one is to find 10 academic articles relevant to a specific media culture topic and write a short paper **(10%) based on those references**. This is an exercise to help you learn to search academic sources to support your argument on a topic. The other is a **media textual analysis exercise (10%)**. It requires you to analyze one of the primetime network shows based on semiotics. This assignment helps you get familiar with the techniques of media textual analysis. The details will be described in handouts.

Final Research Paper (20%) & Final Presentation (5%):
The final research paper is a project for you to apply cultural theories and research methods to the analysis of a real media issue. The details of writing the final paper will be described in the assignment handout. To ensure the completion of the research project, you are required to turn in a draft of your paper before the Thanksgiving week: the **first part** including the introduction and literature review, and the **second part** including abstract, research methods, data analysis, discussion and conclusion. I will send you comments and suggestions for you to revise the paper and turn in the paper after the final exam.

Quizzes (10%) & Final Exam (10%):
There will be two short **quizzes** in order to examine your knowledge about the concepts and terminology employed in cultural studies. Each **quiz** consists of three questions, taking about 10 minutes. The **final exam** will test your knowledge about media cultural studies learned during the semester and your critical thinking skills. **All the tests will be consistent with the study guides distributed before the tests**.

Attendance (10%, 100 points) & Small Group Meeting (5%):
Since this is a critical thinking course, participation in class discussions is very important. I do take your attendance and participation into account for your final grades. You are allowed **two absences without penalty if you notify me in advance,** otherwise, the absence would **result in a 10-point deduction**. **Please save your two absences for potential emergent needs. Coming to the class late or leaving early will be counted for the deduction of absence points as well. Once you have two absences, every one thereafter will result in a 10-point deduction from your final grade.** In addition, there is **no way to make up the leading class discussions** because they are part of the class schedule, **referring to the attendance policy at** http://www.uni.edu/policies/306.

Due to the class size, I'll have small group meetings with you. The meeting intends to facilitate the communication between students and me. Please feel free to provide any comments and suggestions, and **I promise that any negative comments would not have impact on your final grade**.

Reading & Posting (10%):
Regarding class discussion, you are required to read all the assigned materials listed in the syllabus. You need to post your responses to the questions listed on the eLearning for each Reading Material and prepare for the class discussion. **The grading criterion of reading/posting is quantitative**, i.e., based on the percentage of the responses you post.

Leading Discussion (10%)
For the leading discussion, you will be assigned to prepare one of the chapters in the textbook or of extra reading materials, and will need to use visual aids such as PowerPoint presentation, video, or handout, for the class discussion on the topics that the assigned material covers. **The grading criterion of leading discussion is qualitative**, i.e., based on the quality of your performance.

Tentative Class Schedule
8/26 (T) Syllabus and assignment description
Assignment: Leading discussion; Reading and posting on the eLearning
Discussion: Your knowledge about media studies, sign up for leading discussion

8/28 (Th) Discussion: Culture & Semiotics
Reading & Posting: Seiter, E (1992). Semiotics, structuralism, and television. In R. C. Allen (Ed.), *Channels, Discourse, Reassembled*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

9/2 (T) Discussion (Techniques of Interpretation in Media Cultural Studies)
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 1: Semiotic Analysis
Short Paper #1: Literature Review of Media Cultural Studies

9/4 (Th) Discussion (Theoretical concept of cultural studies: Perceiving meanings of television)
Reading & Posting: Fiske, J. (1987). Some television, some topics, and some terminology. In J. Fiske, *Television culture*. New York: METHUEN.

9/9 (T) Critique: Literature Review of Media Studies
Short Paper #1 Due; Short Paper #2: Media Textual Analysis Paper (Semiotic)

9/11 (Th) Discussion (Theoretical concept of cultural studies: Meanings)
Reading & Posting: Hall, S. (Summer, 1974). The television discourse: encoding and decoding. *Education and Culture (Council of Europe)*, (25), 8-15.

9/16 (T) Discussion (Theoretical concept of cultural studies: Meanings)
Reading & Posting: Fiske, J. (1987). Intertextuality. In J. Fiske, *Television culture*. New York: METHUEN.

9/18 (Th) Critique: Media textual analysis paper
Short Paper #2 Media Analysis Due

9/23 (T) Discussion (Theoretical concept of cultural studies: Realism)
Reading & Posting: Fiske, J. (1987). Realism and ideology. In J. Fiske, *Television culture*. New York: METHUEN

9/25 (Th) **Review for Quiz #1**
Sing up for group meetings
Assignment: Final Research Paper

9/30 (T) **Quiz #1**
Discussion: Research topic and brief ideas

10/2 (Th) Discussion: Basic Theories
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 2: Marxist Analysis

10/7 (T) Discussion: Research Methods
Exercise in the class: research methods

10/9 (Th) Discussion: Your research project
Final Research Paper Progress

10/14 (T) Discussion: Basic Theories
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 3: Psychoanalytic Criticism

10/16 (Th) Discussion: Basic Theories
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 4: Sociological Analysis

10/21 (T) Discussion: Research Applications—Dramatic text
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 5: Murders on the Orient Express

10/23 (Th) Discussion: Research Applications—Sports text
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 6: Seven Points on the Game of Football Seven (and Some Interesting Statistics)

10/28 (T) Discussion: Research Applications—Advertising and informational texts
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 7: The Maiden with the Snake: Interpretations of a Print Advertising
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 8: All-News Radio and the American Bourgeoisie

10/30 (Th) Discussion: Research Applications—Gaming text
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 9: Video Games: A New Art Form

11/4 (T) **Review Quiz 2**
Due Online: The First Part Draft of Final Paper (abstract*, introduction, & literature review*)

11/6 (Th) **Guest Lecture**: The Impact of Networked Media on Contemporary Electronic Media Industry
Professor Damien Pfister (University of Nebraska, Lincoln)

11/11 (T) **Quiz 2**
Discussion: research method, data collections.

11/13 (Th) Discussion: Social Media
Reading: Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53, 59-68
Reading: The Fourth Revolution, Twitter, YouTube's Popular Culture

11/18 (T) Discussion: Research Applications—Mobile applications
Reading: (MAT) Chapter 10: Cell Phones, Social Media and the Problem of Identity
Reading: Ryan, M. (2010). Transnationality, globalization, and postcoloniality. In M. Ryan, *Cultural studies: A practical introduction*. UK: Willey-Blackwell

11/20 (Th) NCA Conference (No class); **SIGN UP FOR FINAL PRESENTATION SCHEDULE**
Due online: The Second Part Draft of Final Paper *(methods, data, discussion, & conclusion)*

11/25-27 Thanksgiving (**No Classes**)

12/2 (T) Discussion (Final research paper)
Panel Discussion (Final paper presentations)

12/4 (Th) **Panel Discussion (Final paper presentations)**

12/9 (T) **Panel Discussion (Final paper presentations)**

12/11 (Th) **Panel Discussion (Final paper presentations)**
Final paper due

12/18 (Th) Finals Week (10:00-11:50am) **Final Exam; Panel Discussion (Final paper presentations)**