

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND CULTURAL STUDIES

www.mlcs.ca

2008 - 2009 Winter Term

MLCS 473: Cultural Representations, World Media, and Ethics

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Course WebCT site: www.ualberta.ca/WEBCT/arts/index.html#MLCS

Time: T 15.30 – 18.20

Place: Arts 430

Office Hours: TBA
or by appointment

Course Prerequisite: 6 credits at the 300-level of which 3 must be in a language taught in MLCS **or consent of department**

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes

No, not needed, no such projects involved

Community Service Learning component

Required

Optional

None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material available

Exam registry – Students' Union

http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services_and_businesses/services/infolink/exams

See explanations below

Document distributed in class

Other

NA

Course Description and Objectives:

The role of mass media in society is comparable to that of mirrors. Mass media reflect society in their reporting of news, and in doing so, they also tell us what is right or wrong and thus, influence us. Furthermore, very much like deforming mirrors, their level of accuracy varies and makes us look better or worse. However, it is not always easy to see in which manner and measure they deform us (and the others), and why. The goal of this course is to give us some tools to look at the information provided by mass media in a critical way.

In this course, social phenomena are considered through the *interdisciplinary* perspective of discourse analysis, cultural studies and media studies. The course is conducted as a seminar and is based on the critical reading of research articles. All students will:

- ♦ learn how to consider various media in a critical way;
- ♦ reflect on the role of media discourse in society and on media ethics;
- ♦ gain an understanding of cultural representations;
- ♦ reflect on their own position/reaction towards these cultural representations and on their own use of language;
- ♦ discover different methods of analysis;
- ♦ learn how to read a research article critically;
- ♦ engage into a common research project;
- ♦ have the opportunity to explore a topic of their choice;
- ♦ have the opportunity to relate theory and practice by participating in the activities of a community agency or social action group;
- ♦ be encouraged to work in two languages of their choice.

Texts: See references below

Grade Distribution:

- General participation in class discussions 15%
- Participation in WebCT discussions 15%
- Presentation of an article / discussion 10% (scheduled in class)
- Synthesis and personal conclusion (1000-1200 words) 10% (9 April)
- Article summaries (2 x 5%) 10% (27 January, 17 March)
- Common project 20% (3 February, 3 March, 7 April)
- Individual academic project (1000-1500 words)
OR CSL project (description: see below) 20% (9 April)

Preparation of readings, and participation in class and WebCT discussions

Each week, you are expected to prepare two readings (occasionally, three readings) carefully before coming to class, and to participate actively in class and WebCT discussions. You are not expected to have answers for everything, but to *share your own questions and your understanding /reflection on the topic*. (Detailed organisation on the course WebCT site.)

Presentation of an article / leading of the discussion

You will be responsible for *presenting a specific article and leading the class discussion* about it. The level of understanding you are supposed to reach will depend on your background and the level of difficulty of the article. Depending on the number of enrolments, students may be required to present more than one article. Only the best evaluation will count for the final grade.

Personal synthesis and conclusion

On the basis of the course readings, class and WebCT discussions, and your own reflection, you will *write your own synthesis and conclusions* on the topics of discussed in class. You will relate your previous and new knowledge on these issues, and you will comment on new questions that you now have. Please, note that your personal synthesis and conclusion are not evaluations of the course. Their goal is to make you reflect more explicitly on your learning experience so as to facilitate your further exploration of knowledge. (1000-1200 words) – (More information on the course website)

Article summaries

You will *summarise two articles* (300-500 words each): #1 or #2, and #3. The goal is to ensure that everybody has the necessary introductory background for the course.

Common project

Using Bateman *et alii*, and Kress & van Leeuwen articles [#11, #12 of the coursepack], we will compare international electronic news media. The topic(s) / media will be chosen in class so that comparisons can be made between media and cultures. The results will be presented orally in class. (More information on the course website)

Individual academic project: *All individual academic projects must be approved by the instructor no later than February 10.*

1) You will write a summary of 3 articles of your choice (1000-1500 words). You must justify your choice of articles in terms of content and/or methodological approach.

A summary of a case study must provide information on the research question, the methodology and the most important concepts, the results and their interpretation. A summary of other types of article must clearly indicate the line of argumentation, and contain a definition of the most important concepts. On reviews of literature, see Creswell (2003) [# 4 of the coursepack].

2) Other types of project may be proposed in class and/or on the course website. Students may also present their own project.

Students who choose the individual academic project are expected to take part in the discussion following the informal oral reports on CSL activities (see below) by asking questions and eventually making suggestions.

Community Service-Learning (CSL) project

Students are *strongly encouraged* to choose a CSL project if possible. In such a project, students participate for 15-20 hours in the activities of a community agency or social action group, and this gives them the rare opportunity to develop intellectual and practical skills in a combined manner, link academic learning to social contexts, and build relationships with community members and peers.

You will write a journal detailing your activities and your thoughts on them. In doing so, you will link the activities of the community agency / social action group with issues discussed in class, and examine how practice informs theory and vice-versa.

In addition, all students participating in a CSL project will report regularly, orally and informally in class on their experience so that we can all learn from each other.

In their oral and written report on their CSL activities, all students will respect norms of anonymity and confidentiality. In their written reports, students will include a paragraph explaining how they have addressed issues of anonymity and confidentiality.

Course Content and Readings

Most of the articles in the coursepack were published in one of the four major international journals described below.

- "Media, Culture & Society ... provides a major international forum for the presentation of research and discussion concerning the media, including the newer information and communication technologies, within their political, economic, cultural and historical contexts."
- "Discourse and Society ... explores the relevance of discourse analysis to the social sciences. It stimulates a problem-oriented and critical approach and pays particular attention to the political implications of discourse and communication."
- "The *Journal of Communication* is the flagship journal in the field of Communication Studies, and an essential publication for all communications specialists and policy makers. Interdisciplinary, *the Journal of Communication* concentrates on communication research, practice, policy, and theory, bringing to its readers the latest, broadest, and most important findings."
- "*Journalism Studies* ... provides a forum for the critical discussion and study of journalism as both a subject of academic inquiry and an arena of professional practice."

ARTICLES
CULTURAL STUDIES, MEDIA STUDIES, AND DISCOURSE STUDIES
1. COTTER, Colleen. 2003. Discourse and Media. In Deborah SCHIFFRIN, Deborah TANNEN and Heidi E. HAMILTON (Eds.), <i>The Handbook of Discourse Analysis</i> .. London, Oxford: Blackwell. 416-436.
2. KELLNER, Douglas. 2003. Cultural studies, multiculturalism and media culture. In DINES, Gail & HUMEZ, Jean M. (eds.): <i>Gender, Race, and Class in Media</i> . 2 nd edition. London, New Delhi, and Thousand Oaks: Sage. 9-20.
3. CROTEAU, David & HOYNES, William. 2003. Media Influence and the Political World. In <i>Media Society - Industries, Images and Audiences</i> . 3 rd edition. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge / Sage. 231-164.
METHODOLOGY

<p>4. CRESWELL, John W. 2003. Review of the Literature. In <i>Research Design - Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches</i>. 2nd edition. London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi: Sage Publications. 27-48. <i>Not discussed in class.</i></p>
VISUAL REPRESENTATION
<p>5. FROSH, Paul. 2001. Inside the image factory: Stock photography and cultural production. <i>Media, Culture & Society</i>. 23: 625-646</p>
<p>6. TAYLOR, John. 2005. Iraqi torture photographs and documentary realism in the press. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 6(1): 39-49</p>
<p>7. FISHMAN, Jessica M. & MARVIN, Carolyn. 2003. Portrayals of violence and group difference in newspaper photographs: Nationalism and media. <i>Journal of Communication</i>. 53(1): 32-44.</p>
<p>8. MACHIN, David & NIBLOCK, Sarah. 2008. Branding newspapers. Visual texts as social practice. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 9(2): 244-259.</p>
<p>9. MESSARIS, Paul & ABRAHAM, Linus. 2001. The role of images in framing news stories. In REESE, S., GANDY, O. & GRANT, A. (Eds.), <i>Framing Public Life</i>. Mahwah (NJ) & London: Lawrence Erlbaum. 215-226.</p>
<p>10. BATEMAN, John, Judy DELIN & HENSCHER, Renate. 2007. Mapping the multimodal genres of traditional and electronic newspapers. In ROYCE, Terry & BOWCHER, Wendy (eds.), <i>New Directions in the Analysis of Multimodal Discourse</i>. Mahwah (NJ) & London: Lawrence Erlbaum. 147-172.</p>
<p>11. KRESS, Gunther & VAN LEEUWEN, Theo. 1998. Front pages: (The critical) Analysis of newspaper layout. In BELL, Allan & GARRETT, Peter (eds.): <i>Approaches to Media Discourse</i>. Oxford: Blackwell. 186-219.</p>
INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COMPARISON
<p>12. STROMBACK, Jesper, Adam SHEHATA & Daniela DIMITROVA. 2008. Framing the Mohammad cartoons issue. A cross-cultural comparison of Swedish and US press. <i>Global Media and Communication</i>. 4(2): 117-138.</p>
<p>13. OZGUNES, Neslihan & TERZIS, Georgios. 2000. Constraints and remedies for journalists reporting national conflict: The case of Greece and Turkey. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 1(3): 405-426.</p>
<p>14. THOMSON, Elizabeth, Peter WHITE & Philip KITLEY. 2008. 'Objectivity' and 'Hard news' reporting across cultures. Comparing the news reports in English, French, Japanese and Indonesian journalism. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 9(2): 212-228.</p>
<p>15. HALLIN, Daniel & MANCINI, Paolo. 2004. <i>Comparing Media Systems</i>. Chapter 4: Media and political systems, and the question of differentiation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 66-86</p>
ANGLO-AMERICAN MEDIA ON OTHERS
<p>16. BARKHO, Leon. 2008. The BBC's discursive strategy and practices <i>vis-à-vis</i> Palestinian-Israeli conflict. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 9(2): 278-294.</p>
<p>17. GOSS, Brian. 2004. Foreign correspondent: Spain in the gaze of The New York Times and The Guardian. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 5(2): 203-219.</p>
NATIONAL MEDIA ON NATIONAL IDENTITIES
<p>18. HARDING, Robert. 2006. Historical representations of aboriginal people in the Canadian news media. <i>Discourse & Society</i>. 17(2): 205-235.</p>
<p>19. AVRAHAM, Eli. 2002. Social-political environment, journalism practice and coverage of minorities: The case of the marginal cities in Israel. <i>Media, Culture & Society</i>. 24: 69-86.</p>
<p>20. DIXON, Travis. 2008. Crime news and racialized beliefs: Understanding the relationship between local news viewing and perceptions of African Americans and crime. <i>Journal of Communication</i>. 58: 106-125</p>
TALKING ABOUT US WHEN TALKING ABOUT FOREIGN THEM
<p>21. NOSSEK, Hillel & BERKOWITZ, Dan. 2006. Telling "our" story through news of terrorism. Mythical newswork as journalistic practice in crisis. <i>Journalism Studies</i>. 7(5): 691-707.</p>
<p>22. LEE, Chin-Chuan <i>et alii</i>. 2001. Through the eyes of US media: Banging the democracy drum in Hong Kong. <i>Journal of Communication</i>. 51(2): 345-365.</p>
MEDIA SOURCES

23. BOYD-BARRETT, Oliver & RANTANEN, Terhi. 2005. News agencies as news sources: A re-evaluation. In PATERSON, Chris & SREBERNY, Annabelle, <i>International news in the twenty-first century</i> . London: Libbey. 31-46.
24. THUSSU, Daya Kishan. 2005. Media plenty and the poverty of news. In PATERSON, Chris & SREBERNY, Annabelle, <i>International news in the twenty-first century</i> . London: Libbey. 47-62.
25. BAKER, Nigel. 2005. Invisible giants, quiet revolution. In PATERSON, Chris & SREBERNY, Annabelle, <i>International news in the twenty-first century</i> . London: Libbey. 63-78
26. HANNERZ, Ulf. 2004. The landscape of news. In <i>Foreign News: Exploring the World of Foreign Correspondents</i> . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 39-70.
MEDIA ETHICS
27. RAO, Shakuntala & LEE, Seow Ting. 2005. Globalizing media ethics? An assessment of universal ethics among international political journalists. <i>Journal of Mass Media Ethics</i> , 20(2&3): 99-120.
28. CHRISTIANS, Clifford G. 2005. Ethical theory in communications research. <i>Journalism Studies</i> . 6(1): 3-14.

For basic references: see course Web site

Tentative Schedule (i.e. subject to changes)

2009	TUESDAY	
JANUARY		
<i>Introduction</i>	6	Welcome! 1- Cotter (2003); 2- Kellner (2003); 3- Croteau & Hoynes (2003)
Visual representation	13	5- Frosh (2001) 6- Taylor (2005) 7- Fishman & Marvin (2003)
Visual representation	20	8- Machin & Niblock (2008) 9- Messaris & Abraham (2001)
Visual representation	27	10- Bateman, Delin & Henshel (2007) 11- Kress & van Leeuwen (1998) <i>First summary due</i>
FEBRUARY		
<i>Common project</i>	<u>3</u>	Analysis
International media comparison	10	12- Stromback, Shehata & Dimitrova (2008) 13- Ozgunes & Terzis (2000) 14- Thompson, White & Kitley (2008) 15- Hallin & Mancini (2004) <i>Proposal for individual academic project due</i>
<i>Reading week</i>	17	
Anglo-American media on Others	24	16- Barkho (2008) 17- Goss (2004)
MARCH		

<i>Common project</i>	<u>3</u>	In-class group work
National media on national minorities	10	18- Harding (2006) 19- Avraham (2000) 20- Dixon (2008)
Talking about Us when telling about foreign Them	17	21- Nossek & Berkowitz (2006) 22- Lee & al. (2001) <i>Second summary due</i>
Media sources	24	23- Boyd-Barrett (2005) 24- Thussu (2005) 25- Baker (2005) 26- Hannerz (2004)
Ethics	31	27- Rao & Lee (2005) 28- Christians (2005)
APRIL		
<i>Conclusion</i>	<u>7</u>	Common Project Presentation <i>Thursday, 9 : Individual(CSL or academic) project due - Personal conclusions due</i>

For more information on the course content and work, **see the course Web site**.
Students are responsible for reading all of the information given in the course Web site.

To access your course Web site

1. From the University home page, click on the **eClass** link (top right corner) .
2. Click on "**Log on to eClass**".
3. **Log In**, i.e. enter your GPU ID and password, and click **OK**.
4. Select your course site.

Reading Messages

1. Once you have logged on to a course, click on the "Chat" for a specific group of readings
2. Select the article in which you are interested.
3. If there are messages in the topic, you see the subject or subject thread. Click on the green arrow next to each subject to see the messages.
4. Click on a message to read it.
5. To go from one message to another, you can click on Next message or Previous message.
6. To go from one subject thread to another, close the message window to return to the list of subject threads and select a different thread.
7. To go from one topic to another, click on Discussion to return to the list of topics.

Posting a Message

1. To reply to that message, simply click on "Reply."
2. The subject line is automatically filled in when you reply to a message. Just type in your message and click "Post."
3. Sometimes you may wish to participate in online discussion by replying to others, but at other times you may want to initiate a subject. After entering a topic, click on "Compose", to start a new subject thread.
4. Fill in the subject and type your message. Click "Post."

REQUIRED NOTES

"Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar." (GFC 29 SEP 2003). "The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic

integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

Plagiarism and Cheating

All students should consult the “Truth-In-Education” handbook or Website (<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>) regarding the definitions of plagiarism and its consequences when detected. Students should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, excessive editorial and creative help in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences. An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. Before unpleasantness occurs consult <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/>; also discuss this matter with any tutor(s) and with your instructor.

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.4.2 and 23.4.3 of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Policy for Late Assignments

Students who consult in advance with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension without penalty. At the discretion of the instructor, a 10% penalty per day-late may also be assessed. Otherwise, no late assignment will be accepted.

Grading

Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below (“**MLCS Grading Scale**”). The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

“MLCS Grading Scale”

Letter	%	Pts	Descriptor
A+	95-100%	4.0	Outstanding: Superior performance showing understanding and knowledge of the subject matter far exceeding expectations.
A	90-94%	4.0	Excellent: Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	86-89%	3.7	Very good: Clearly above average performance with complete knowledge of subject matter.
B+	82-85%	3.3	Very good
B	75-81%	3.0	Good: average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
B-	70-74%	2.7	Good
C+	66-69%	2.3	Satisfactory: Basic understanding of the subject matter
C	61-65%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	58-60%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	55-57%	1.3	Minimal Pass: Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
D	50-54%	1.0	Minimal Pass: Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
F	0-49%	0.0	Fail: Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.