

MDIA 410 International News Media

Wednesdays 11 AM- 1 PM—Term 2 2006

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Course Aims

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the theories and findings from the primary areas of academic research related to the international news media. This is accomplished by reading classic and recent research articles, discussing these readings in seminar, and creating a research outline for extending an area of study.

Course Objectives

By focusing on the dynamics involved, it is expected that students will develop an understanding of the international news media that will allow them to successfully interact with the academic research related to the subject, including preparations for conducting independent research. Specifically students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Read, deconstruct and assess academic research on this subject.
- 2) Identify and analyze connections between academic research publications as they fit within a larger body of knowledge.
- 3) Suggest ways in which future research might be fruitfully conducted from the foundation of the existing body of knowledge.
- 4) Design research projects that are of reasonable scope and, if conducted would make a modest but clear contribution to the discipline.
- 5) Demonstrate comprehension of the general state of knowledge in the study of international news media.

Expectations and Presumptions

Students are presumed to have a high level of interest and self-motivation.

Students are presumed to have all of the knowledge and skills expected of an honours student. In addition to a reasonable undergraduate background in one of the cognate streams in media studies, this includes the ability to write coherent argumentative papers of a modest length, the ability to independently extract relevant information from assigned readings and the ability to debate issues in a clear, rational academic fashion.

Students are expected to be reasonably computer literate. This includes the ability to use a word processor, the ability to search and explore the Internet, the ability to use library resources for the study of current research, and competence using email as a means of communicating with the course coordinator.

As documented in the course catalogue, students are expected to commit a full 24 hours per week to an honours paper. This means 22 hours of reading, study, assignments and

writing in addition to lectures and tutorials. If you read slowly, have trouble writing in English or have other difficulties working efficiently, you should commit additional time as needed.

All students will be assessed with absolute equality. No exceptions to course requirements will be made for personal circumstance of any kind. Students with documented special needs will be accommodated on a case by case basis, but accommodations will only be made to help the student attain the required quality of work. There will be no adjustments to the quantity or quality of work expected from the student. The course is designed to minimize the need to make such accommodations, but students should inform the course coordinator of any specific needs at the beginning of the term.

Students are expected to be able to work comfortably in English. This includes understanding lectures, reading, writing, speaking and all other aspects of university work. An occasional, minor grammatical or vocabulary error in written English will be overlooked so long as the substantive content of the assignment is clear. No other adjustments to assessment or course material will be made for non-native English speakers or others who might have language difficulties.

Texts, Required Materials, and Expenses

For our weekly, assigned readings we will read research articles, the vast majority of which will be available in hardcopy in the library and/or online through the library.

One book is required and must be purchased:

Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Akiba A. Cohen (2006) News Around the World. Routledge

Tests and Evaluated and Assignments

Below is an outline of the points of student assessment and a rough depiction of how they factor into the final student grade. Please remain aware of two things: First, whether or not it is specifically listed below, every assignment, every class discussion, every activity will factor into the student's final grade. Second, the weighting of these elements is approximate and students should know that in the final evaluation of your performance I will give a modest degree of extra emphasis to the area or assignment where the student has been the most successful. All points of assessment must be completed to pass the course. Also students are reminded that all grades assigned by the instructor are provisional.

Literature Review Assignment	40%
Research Design Assignment	40%
Weekly Discussion Notes	10%
Participation in Class	10%
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Total	100%

Literature Review Assignment

The literature review assignment is one of the primary written assignments for the course and will be turned in before 11:59 AM, 17 August 2006. The intent is for the student to describe, in detail, how a research question of his or her choosing fits with the existing research that is relevant to it. This will require the student to conduct a significant quantity of self-directed reading and library work and students should begin early in order to insure that they can obtain interlibrary loan material in a timely fashion. The length for this assignment is 3,000-3,500 words and students should be aware that papers over 3,500 words will be penalized the same as papers under 3,000 words.

Research Design Assignment

The research design assignment is intended to build upon the literature review assignment. However, students who are unhappy with their literature review assignment may opt for the additional work of creating a new literature review with no penalty. This assignment will detail how the student could conduct independent research into the news media. The goal is to create a document that could easily be edited into a proposal for a master's thesis. The length for this assignment is 6,000-7000 words, but half of this length is expected to be an edited version of the literature review assignment. This assessment must be turned in before 11:59 AM, 16 October 2006.

Weekly Discussion Notes

The weekly discussion notes are notes, questions and discussion points distilled from the readings. They are meant to facilitate discussion and must be completed before each seminar meeting. Two copies should be brought to the seminar, one to be turned in at the start of the seminar and one for the student to use during the discussion. 70% of these must be completed to complete this assessment.

Participation in Class

Your participation in the discussions and activities of the seminar will also be evaluated. The only point to be made here can be summed up with the immortal words of Douglas Adams "Don't Panic." If your seminar performance is endangering your final grade I will alert you in clear and unmistakable terms. However, attendance is a big part of this requirement and in the absence of exceptional circumstances, missing more than 2 class meetings will constitute a failure to complete this assessment and result in a failing grade for the course.

Additional notes on written assignments.

Always keep a copy of the finished essay or take-home test. It is your responsibility to submit the assignment on time, and in the event of loss to make a new copy available to your tutor.

All text should be double-spaced. This means leaving an empty line between the lines of your own writing and becomes important when a tutor is marking your work. In respect of script size, you should use a 12 point font for the main essay text and a 10 point font for footnote/endnote details.

Assignments must, include a Media Studies cover page. They must be stapled and each page numbered. Do not use plastic covers or binders.

In the scheme developed for evaluating student performance, every possible effort is made to give the student the best possible grade that can be justified while at the same time striving to be fair to every student in the course. For the most part, this means that when your test or other assignment is returned to you it has already been evaluated for all of the nits, bits and pieces that could help your grade. Unless there has been some kind of gross error on the part of the marker, grades are final when recorded. Your tutor will be happy to discuss your grade with you and she will become down right giddy if you ask her advice on how to perform better in the future. However, please keep in mind that tutors have a wide variety of responsibilities and are only paid for a limited number of hours of work. Try to either utilize a scheduled time that is set aside for interacting with students or if that is impossible, schedule an appointment. The easier it is for your tutor to focus on your work, the more valuable the feedback will be.

General Explanation of Assessment Criteria

Comments recorded on papers and tests are made in reference to these general definitions of what the letter marks signify.

A+ (85-100%)

Excellent work showing sophisticated and independent thought. Superior analysis, comprehensive research, good theoretical or methodological understanding and impeccable presentation.

A (80- 84%)

Work is distinguished by their clarity of thought and argument. Question is answered skillfully, is meticulously structured and the argument is convincing. Demonstrates sophisticated comprehension of the topic, a familiarity with scholarship & research in the area, and a clear understanding of related theoretical issues. A high standard of critical analysis. Presentation and organization are excellent with correct use of citation conventions when required.

A- (75- 79%)

Work of a high standard: ideas could be of 'A' quality material but the overall effect was undermined by limitation or inconsistency in one area. It could also be 'A' material that was flawed by the quality or consistency of its technical presentation, research support, or theoretical understandings. Demonstrates independent thought, good writing skills, effective selection/structuring of material, and a general clarity and sense of purpose.

B+ (70% - 74%)

Work which exhibits a good standard of research and of writing. Contains some perceptive analysis, and effective research, preparation and planning. This work may demonstrate insight and perception but this standard is not maintained through the whole work. The argument, technical quality, and other elements may be inconsistent in quality.

May require greater integration of theoretical or empirical analysis. Demonstrates some independence of thought.

B (65% - 69%)

Consistently good work and still above average. May demonstrate strong analysis, theoretical reading or contextual knowledge, but without integrating these elements into a balanced argument. May be well researched and documented but in the 'B' range there could well be a deficiency in some aspect of research or understanding. May have problems with technical presentation, structure, argument and/or research.

B- (60% - 64%)

Good work but may not be consistent and thus falls short of 'B' quality in one or more respects. In this grade area the work will have exceeded the standard expected for passes at this level. Question is satisfactorily answered and has been appropriately informed by research, but there is less attention to the detail and complexity of issues. There may be problems with the essay structure, the writing style, the selection of material or the argument. There may also be problems with presentation, expression, and grammar.

C+ (55% - 59%)

The essay is limited in achievement due to an overall incapacity for independent research or thought – hence it will tend to demonstrate a reliance on lecture material. Work in the C range will have paid insufficient attention to critical sources and not be widely researched. Work in this category may have deficiencies in structure and organization, the quality of argument, and/or the writing style.

C (50% - 54%)

Satisfactory completion of set tasks only. Basic engagement with the subject matter, and lacking in critical analysis or a considered conceptual approach. May be poorly planned and constructed, with serious problems of clarity and expression. May not have used or have acknowledged an appropriate range of sources. May be purely descriptive. There may be some significant problems with writing, research or organization.

D (40% - 49%)

Misses the point of the exercise or has failed to respond adequately to it. The work is deficient in important respects to the extent that it cannot be regarded satisfactory at this level. A 'D' grade essay may contain some elements of attaining a pass grade.

E (0% - 39%)

This category implies that the essay is well below the achievement minimum (in a range of respects) for work at this level. A E essay will demonstrate not one, but several of the 'D' essay's deficiencies - it may be well short or far in excess of the prescribed length, badly written, poorly conceived, ill structured, hastily prepared, full of technical or other inaccuracies, and/or lacking in even a basic understanding of the concepts. E's are bad.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

The coordinating instructor for MDIA 207 has no tolerance whatsoever for academic dishonesty. Any act of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for this course and the vigorous pursuit of all possible penalties available including suspension or expulsion from the university. Also note that the coordinator primary area of research is the computer assisted content analysis of text and he often uses automated analysis programs designed to detect plagiarism and students who “share” work.

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means no cheating. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. ‘Someone else’s work’ means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programs and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.

Plagiarism is not worth the risk.

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct (www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University’s website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

Student Services

Students with Impairments

(see **Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook**)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

telephone: 463-6070
email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The name of your School's Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contact is Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Maori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International. In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

General University Requirements

Students should familiarize themselves with the University's requirements, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures, contained in the statutes in the Calendar. The requirements documented in this course outline should be considered in that context. The Calendar also contains the Statute on Conduct, which ensures that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The statute contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint.

Grievance Procedures

If you have any academic or other problems in or with this course, you should talk to the tutor concerned as soon as possible. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, or if there is reasonable justification for involving a higher authority please consult the Coordinating Instructor. If necessary, a problem can be brought to the attention of the Director of Media Studies, Head of SEFT or the Associate Dean (Students) of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Class representatives are available to assist you with the process.

Contacting the Coordinating Instructor

The way to make contact is to drop by on Tuesday or Wednesday afternoons during posted office hours. Office hours are primarily intended for quick questions, clarifications of the material, questions about how to improve on the next test or other consultations that do not require preparation. Other types of consultation generally require an appointment.

Blackboard

Blackboard is not used for this course.

Course Readings Schedule

All readings and the discussion notes for those readings, must be completed before the assigned week

Week 1

Course introduction. Discussion of the nature of postgraduate study at Vic

Week 2—International Coverage—News Flows

Available through ProQuest

News agencies, national images, and global media events C Anthony Giffard, Nancy K Rivenburgh. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. Columbia: Spring 2000. Vol. 77, Iss. 1; p. 8 (14 pages)

Available through ProQuest

New York Times and network TV news coverage of foreign disasters: The significance of the insignificant variables Douglas A Van Belle. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. Columbia: Spring 2000. Vol. 77, Iss. 1; p. 50 (21 pages)

Available through ProQuest

Swain, KA Proximity and power factors in western coverage of the sub-Saharan AIDS crisis *JOURNALISM MASS COMM 80* (1): 145-165 SPR 2003

Week 3—International Coverage—Comparisons of Coverage

Available through ProQuest

From Afghanistan to Chechnya: News coverage by Izvestia and the New York Times Olga V Malinkina, Douglas M McLeod. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. Columbia: Spring 2000. Vol. 77, Iss. 1; p. 37 (13 pages)

Available through ProQuest

Natarajan, K, Hao, XM An Asian voice? A comparative study of Channel News Asia and CNN J COMMUN 53 (2): 300-314 JUN 1 2003

Available Through SwetsWise Online Content

Clausen L, Localizing the global: 'domestication' processes in international news production MEDIA CULTURE & SOCIETY 26 (1): 25+ JAN 2004

Week 4—International Coverage—The Effect of Technology

Available in Library

Seib, P Weaving the web: The Internet's effect on international news coverage and international relations MILLENNIUM-J INT ST 32 (3): 617-641 2003

Available through Ebsco Host

The Effects of Satellite Technology on Newsgathering from Remote Locations STEVEN LIVINGSTON, DOUGLAS a Van BELLE Political Communication, Volume 22, Number 1 (February 2005) Page Numbers: 45 - 62

Available through Ebsco Host

Livingston, S, Bennett, WL Gatekeeping, indexing, and live-event news: Is technology altering the construction of news? POLIT COMMUN 20 (4): 363-380 OCT-DEC 2003

Week 5—International Coverage—International Political Influences

Available through Ebsco Host

The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations EYTAN GILBOA Political Communication, Volume 22, Number 1 (February 2005) Page Numbers: 27 - 44

Available through ProQuest

Making a difference: U.S. press coverage of the Kwangju and Tiananmen pro-democracy movements Sung Tae Kim. Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly. Columbia: Spring 2000. Vol. 77, Iss. 1; p. 22 (15 pages)

Available through ProQuest

Wanta W, Golan G, Lee C, Agenda setting and international news: Media influence on public perceptions of foreign nations *JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION QUARTERLY* 81 (2): 364-377 SUM 2004

Available through Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre

Smyth R, Mapping US public diplomacy in the 21(st) century *AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* 55 (3): 421-444 NOV 2001

Week 6—International Coverage—Coverage of Locations

Available through Web of Science Link Finder

Willems W (2004) Peasant demonstrators, violent invaders: Representations of land in the Zimbabwean press *WORLD DEVELOPMENT* 32 (10): 1767-1783 OCT 2004

Available through ProQuest

Cassara C (1998) US newspaper coverage of human rights in Latin America, 1975-1982: Exploring President Carter's agenda-building influence *JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION QUARTERLY* 75 (3): 478-486

Available through Ebsco Host

Hanson D, White R (2003) Rhetorics of environmental routinisation in one Australian company's annual reports *AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ISSUES* 38 (4): 477-493

Week 7—Media Systems

Available through ProQuest

McQuail D (2005) Comparing media systems: Three models of media and politics *EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION* 20 (2): 266-268 JUN 1 2005

Available through Ebsco Host

Hughes S, Lawson C (2005) The barriers to media opening in Latin America *POLITICAL COMMUNICATION* 22 (1): 9-25

Week 8—Studying the Global News Media 1

Shoemaker and Cohen, Intro through Chapter 11

Week 9— Studying the Global News Media 2

Shoemaker and Cohen, Chapter 12 Through Conclusion

Week 10—Student Presentations

Week 11—Student Presentations

Week 12—Student Presentations