



Introduction to Mass Communication Syllabus
United States International University, Nairobi

Course Details:

Course Number: JRN 1109 – A (Lecture) - 3 credit hours

Meeting Days/Times:

Class Meeting Location:

Class Duration:

Faculty:

Recommended Texts and Readings:

Baran, Stanley J. (2012). *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture*. New York, NY: Mc Graw Hill Companies.

Campbell, R., Martin, C.R., & Fabos, B. (2011). *Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication*, 8e. Bedford/St. Martin's.

Journal articles and other readings:

National Assembly Bills (2013). *The Media Council Act*. Nairobi, KE: The Government Printer.

Odhiambo, L. O. (2002). The Media Environment in Kenya since 1990. *African Studies*, 61(2), 295-318.

Tomaselli, K. G. (2009). Repositioning African media studies: thoughts and provocations. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 1(1), 9-21.

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The JRN 1109 course traces the historical development of print, broadcast, public relations and advertising and its impact on society, and at the same time, it examines the rapid growth and development of the internet. It introduces students to the inventors, patents, copyright regulations, scriptwriting formats, Kenya government media regulation statutes, and careers in the media industry. At the same time, the course explores how the media reflect and inspire cultural, political, and ethical norms with emphasis on various storytelling techniques based on audience and method of delivery. The course also examines the role of the mass media in the creation for the audience.

2. PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The aim of this course is to introduce students to the principles, philosophies, policies and practices of mass media industries, (print, broadcast, internet and digital communications) and allied professions of advertising and public relations. Attention is also given to historical perspectives, regulations, global implications and change.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

In addition to the university-wide outcomes of: higher order thinking; oral and written competence; scientific and technological literacy; global understanding and multicultural perspectives; leadership and ethics; and service to the community, whose foundation is laid by the General Education Program (see section on General Education), the following are the Journalism program-specific Learning Outcomes:

1. Discuss and apply theory to local and global mass media communication systems, structures and operations.
2. Write and critique stories for various journalistic genres.

3. Produce and evaluate radio, television, and other audio-visual programs.
4. Design and evaluate strategic plans and practices for public relations.
5. Use appropriate information and communication technology to package and present media products.
6. Analyze and evaluate current media and communication research.
7. Apply ethical management and legal principles to the media industry.

4. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course the students should be able to:

1. Clearly identify and explain mass communication industries, terminology, and theories through knowledge of current events and contemporary communication issues.
2. Analyze the relationship between traditional mass media, new media, and society
3. Demonstrate an understanding and analyze the legal, economic, professional and ethical principles when gathering, reporting, editing and publishing information.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of media business management principles including audience analysis, content analysis, advertising, regulation, and media effects.
5. Demonstrate critical thinking skills by reading, analyzing, and critiquing relevant communication literature.
6. Develop a better understanding of career options and define personal career goals through practical experience, professional experiences, and critical reflection on the communications profession

5. PORTFOLIO

Students will work with an aim to populate their portfolio in this class. The portfolio contains several documents geared toward landing a position in the communications field. Each portfolio will reflect the student's individual skills. This class requires that the student produce at least one major project to include in their portfolio.

6. GRADING:

1. Weekly class activities @ 20 - (Weekly News Article Summary, in-class exercises)	- 200 points
2. Midterm Exam	- 100 points
3. Class Blog Discussion (4 @ 20)	- 80 points
4. Media Organization Assignment	- 50 points
5. African/Kenyan Media Research Assignment (Oral Presentation/Research/PPT)	- 120 points
6. Annotated Bibliography	- 50 points
7. Career Profile Assignment	- 50 points
8. Final Exam Project	- 100 points
TOTAL	650 points

7. WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

This schedule may be modified at any time during the semester to better meet the needs of the class.

Week 1

In-Class Activities:

- Class Introduction (Syllabus, BB walk-through)
 - Working Groups, and individual's assignments for the semester
- Reference/ Reading: Campbell, et al 8e (2011) Timeline (located at the beginning of the 8th edition text)
(we will begin the next class (Monday) by briefly discussing this timeline)

Reading: Cambell Chapter 1, Baran (2012) Chapter 1

Week 2 –

Mass Communication: A critical approach / The Internet, Digital Media and Media Convergence

In-Class Activities:

Pre-test(s)

Discussion:

- Evolution of mass media
- Mass media and the Process of communication
- Surveying the cultural landscape, critiquing media and culture
- Evolution of the internet
- From Media Convergence to the Web, the internet and democracy

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 2, 3; Baran (2012) Chapter 2

Week 3

Sound Recording and Popular Music

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- Development of sound-recording
- The music industry; US and the world.
- The Business of Sound recording

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 4; Baran (2012) Chapter 7

Week 4

Popular Radio and the Origins of Broadcasting

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- Evolution of Radio technology and social impact
- The economics of radio broadcast
- Radio and democracy

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 5; Baran (2012) Chapter 7

Week 5 -

Television and Cable: The power of visual culture

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- Development of TV and programming trends
- Development of Cable
- Regulatory challenges and the economics of ownership of TV and Cable

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 6; Baran (2012) Chapter 8

Week 6 –

Movies and the impact of images

In-Class Activities:

- Discussion:

- Evolution of Movies and the rise of Hollywood
- The Studio system 'golden age'
- The economics of business
- Popular movies and democracy

Assignments: Read: Campbell – Chapter 7; Baran (2012) Chapter 6

Week 7 – Mid-term examinations

Exams

Week 8 –

Newspapers: The rise and decline of Modern Journalism

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- The evolution of newspapers in the USA and the world
- Business and ownership of newspapers in the face of convergence media and the web
- Newspapers and democracy

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 8; Baran (2012) Chapter 4

Week 9

Magazines: in the age of specialization

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- The history and development of modern Magazines
- Organization and economics of magazines
- Magazines and democracy

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 9; Baran (2012) Chapter 5

Week 10 –

Books and the power of print

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- History of Books papyrus to paperbacks
- Modern publishing and the book industry
- Current ownership issues in the book industry and the future of democracy

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 10; Baran (2012) Chapter 3

Week 11 –

Advertising and Commercial culture / Public Relations and Framing the message

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- History and Development of American Advertising
- Persuasive techniques in contemporary advertising
- Advertising politics and democracy
- Early development and public relations
- Tensions between public relations and the press
- Public Relations and democracy

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 11, 12; Baran (2012) Chapter 11, 12

Week 12

Media Economics and the Global Marketplace / The Culture of Journalism: Values, Ethics and Democracy

In-Class Activities:

- Discussion:

- Analyzing the media economy
- Transition to an information economy
- Specialization in global markets and issues in media economics
- The media marketplace and democracy
- Modern Journalism in the information age
- Ethics and the news media
- Alternative models: Public Journalism and fake “news”
- Democracy and realigning Journalism role

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 13, 14; Baran (2012) Chapter 13

Week 13 –

Media Effects and Cultural approaches to research / Legal controls and the freedom of expression

In-Class Activities:

Discussion:

- Early media research methods
- Research on media effects
- Cultural approaches to media research
- Media research and democracy
- The origins of free expression and a free press
- Film and the first amendment
- Expression in the media: print, broadcast and online

Reading: Campbell – Chapter 14, 15; Baran (2012) Chapter 14, 15

** Student Presentations – Final Exam Project*

** Annotated Bibliography Due*

Please note that, while a syllabus is contract between the students and the professor on the mode of instruction in a given semester, the professor retains the right to change the syllabus at any time at their own professional discretion.

Let's make this a great semester!