

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SCIENCES TECHNOLOGY

JRN 2201 Introduction To Print Media

CREDITS: THREE UNITS

COURSE INSTRUCTOR:

Consultation Hours:

CLASS Hours:

This course partly contributes to the following Journalism programme learning outcomes (PLO) – Which are to help the students, at the end of the semester:

- To discuss communication theory and its application to local and global mass communication system, structures and operations (PLONo.1)
- Research, gather write and critique stories of various journalistic genres

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Understand and explain the nature of news as a genre and journalism as a profession.
- Discuss the concept of news as a product of organizational/societal and professional culture
- Exhibit a comprehension of the process of gathering , processing and how it affects the end products
- Understand what it takes to be a good news reporter
- Identify and understand news sources and newsmakers, their roles and their relationships with journalists.

GRADING

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- 90% - 100% A
- 87% - 89% A-
- 84% - 86% B+
- 80% - 83% B
- 77% - 79% B-
- 74% - 76% C+
- 70% - 73% C
- 67% - 69% C-
- 64% - 66% D+
- 62% - 63% D
- 60% - 61% D-
- 0% - 59% F

COURSE CONTENT and SCHEDULE

Week 1

introduction

- What is journalism
- What is news? Nature of news and News values
- News and Human interest
- Structure of news

Discussion point:

“News is about events, not states-of-affairs. News aims at current rather than past or future events. News is the report of an event, not the experience of an event”. Joseph Halberstam – A Prolegomenon of a Theory of News.

Is news part and parcel of human culture?

Reading:

- Applegate, Edd: *Print and Broadcast Journalism*, Praeger, London, 1996 : chapter 2

Week 2

Milestones on the history and development of print media

- The printing press
- The Penny press
- Functions and roles of the press

Discussion point

Entertainment is the one function that the media fulfills more than any other. In all its functions, the media

Reading:

- Applegate, Edd: *Print and Broadcast Journalism*, Praeger, London, 1996 : chapter 4

Week 3

Mass communication theories

- The Four theories of the press
- Gate keeping

Week 4

Communication Theories continued

- Agenda setting
- Dominant paradigm

Discussion point:

The media merely provides a forum for the dominant groups/people to enhance their influence and domination of society. Discuss

Readings:

- McQuail, D: *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*, Vistaar, New Delhi
- Applegate, Edd: *Print and Broadcast Journalism*, Praeger, London, 1996 : chapter 1

Week 5

The Reporter

- His/her job
- Characteristics

Readings:

- Mencher, Melvin: *News Reporting and Writing* 9th ed. McGraw-Hill, New York 200. (Chapter 1)

Week 6

The Newsmakers

- Who, what makes news?
- Actors in the news – the Knowns and Unknowns in the news

Discussion point

The only chance that the lesser known and influential people have of making it into the News is by association, either with an influential person or by being in a group that is involved in a newsworthy event.

Can the media really, then, still be credited with the of setting the national/social agenda ?

Readings:

- Gans, Herbert J *Deciding What's News*. Evanston, Illinois, NorthWestern University. (Chapter 1)

Week 7

- Midsemester exams

Week 8

- Activities in the News
- The Nation/Society as a major actor in the news

Week 9

The News Sources

- Types of news sources
- Availability/accessibility
- Suitability

Discussion point:

Attribution is an important aspect of journalism. Even if the reporter had first-hand knowledge of the event he/she is reporting on, it is vital that he/attributes information to a SOURCE.

There is a tendency among reporters to base their stories mostly on what is said, or done by individuals. However, some of the best news stories are simply being written from observation.

Readings

- Gans, Herbert J *Deciding What's News*. Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University (Pg 116)

Week 11

Story selection

- Gate keeping and story selection
- News organisations - structures and how they affect story selection

Readings:

- *Gans, Herbert J Deciding What's News*. Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University (Pgs 116-146)

Week 12

- The concept of fair play
- Balance and Objectivity

Readings:

- *Applegate, Edd, 1996; Print and Broadcast journalism: A critical Examination: Praeger-WestPort, Connecticut (Chapter 3)*
- *Gans, Herbert J Deciding What's News*. Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University (Pgs 182)

Week 13

Suitability of stories

Factors that influence suitability of stories

- Medium
- Commercial
- Human interest.

Discussion point:

As business enterprises, media organisations' first priority is to make profit. They are also expected to champion the interests of the public. With ownership structures of the world media today, can they, (the media) walk the line between fearlessly pursuing stories that of public interest whatever the consequences, and making profit for shareholders?

Readings:

- Gans, Herbert J *Deciding What's News*. Evanston, Illinois, NorthWestern University (Pgs 182)

Week 14

End of semester examination

Course text

1. Gans, Herbert J *Deciding What's News*: Evanston, Illinois, NorthWestern University Press, 2004,

Reading List

- Moorish, John: *Magazine Editing*; Routledge, NY
- Applegate, Edd, 1996; *Print and Broadcast journalism: A critical Examination*: Praeger-WestPort, Connecticut
- Stephen Hess: *News and News making*: The Brookings Institution, Washington DC 1995
- Mencher, Melvin: *News Reporting and Writing* 9th ed. McGraw-Hill, New York 2003
- McQuail, D: *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*, Vistaar, New Delhi
- McNair, B: *The Sociology of Journalism*: Arnold, London, 1998