

FS: 100 – The World Through the Eyes of the Media
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Office: 206B Steinman Center
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9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
Mondays and Wednesdays

Fall 2006

Textbooks & Readings (required):

1. Potter, W. James. (2005) *Media Literacy*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
2. Readings and Resources list in syllabus and distributed and suggested during semester.

Course Description and Purpose:

We construct much of our knowledge and opinions of foreign cultures from reports provided by the mass media. Analysis of the media, its role and its content, coupled with investigations into other cultures will be addressed in this Freshman Seminar. The goals for this seminar include:

- raising students' awareness and interest in global issues;
- raising students' awareness of the media's ability to control the information we (Americans) use to form perspectives on international issues; and
- examining mass communications within an international context.

Course Objectives:

1. *Introduce students to the academic expectations of college life.* This class will introduce students to the academic expectations of college life. These include time management, study skills, class performance expectations, group participation skills, integrity issues, and college resources. Class and peer counselor discussions will provide an opportunity for active class participation in these issues.
2. *Engage in the practice of critical analysis and synthesis.* Critical analysis and synthesis of new ideas will be practiced through reading assignments, class discussions and peer group discussions, and formal papers presented in this class. Reaction/opinion papers will require students to integrate old and new concepts concerning the discussion topics with their personal impressions. The semester project paper will provide a culminating activity of this process of critical analysis and synthesis as students create a unique contribution through an investigation of an international issue.
3. *Establish writing as a principal means by which the educated person thinks, understands, and communicates.* Reviewing scholarly articles, broadcast and print media coupled with the writing of opinion papers and the semester project paper will establish the importance of written communications as the primary means by which educated people think, understand and communicate. Semester project paper topic will be approved by instructor. Through the class, students will be introduced to the APA style as a standard documentation style.
4. *Develop communication skills -- reading, listening, speaking.* Communication skills will be practiced and improved through the exploration of the course materials. Students will be required to read a combination of scholarly articles, mass media journalistic articles and personal correspondence. Students will practice critical reading skills when comparing and preparing to discuss these divergent styles of writing. Listening skills will be practiced in class discussion and peer group discussion sessions. Also, listening skills will be practiced and evidenced through reaction papers, in which the student will review experiences such as presenters and class/group discussions.

Speaking skills will be practiced through the semester project paper presentation. Students will learn to condense and convert the content of a written term paper into a formal oral presentation. Critical elements such as timing, visual aids and speaking skills will be addressed during the class discussion sessions.

5. *Explore the methods of a particular body of knowledge and/or discipline.*

The body of knowledge that students will explore in this course will include that of media literacy and criticism. Through this course students will be introduced to eight key concepts of media literacy. This model to media literacy “seeks to empower citizenship, to transform citizens’ passive relationship to media into an active, critical engagement capable of challenging the traditions and structures of a privatized commercial media culture, and thereby find new avenues of citizen speech and discourse.” (Wally Bowen, Citizens for Media Literacy, 1996.)

The media are a broad, amorphous field, extending not just from traditional media such as newspapers and magazines to television and film, but also now encompassing many areas of popular culture such as new technologies like the Internet. Anyone attempting to make sense of this area needs a clear conceptual framework that will allow for discussion of a variety of complex and interrelated factors. A central concept to the media literacy theory and model is that all communication is a construction of reality. An understanding of this concept is the starting point for a critical relationship to the media.

6. *Establish the library as a major repository of knowledge.* The library will be the source of the majority of the materials needed to develop the overview of the semester project paper and where the bulk of the resources for this course will be located. This includes scholarly journals, books and newspapers. Other resources that will compliment the library as the primary repository of knowledge will include broadcast newscasts (radio and television) and internet resources. These “live” resources should serve as examples to support the knowledge documented through traditional literature review processes.

7. *Explain and establish standards of academic integrity.* The College’s Integrity Code, copyright laws, and personal codes of ethics will be discussed and applied to all course work (papers, exams and projects).

8. *Foster an attitude of enthusiasm and a genuine intellectual curiosity toward learning.* The semester project will engage students in an original investigation that will integrate their creativity with an academic pursuit that shows that they can create new knowledge from their own experiences and investigation.

9. *Include a component that engages students in researching a subject, gathering and evaluating information, organizing and writing a paper, and using proper documentation. A standard documentation style may be any recognized format, as long as the student uses one consistently.*

Each student will complete a semester project, which will include an investigation of an international issue and the media’s attention to that issue. A typical model for this investigation may include:

- defining the issue or question through a formal review of literature pertaining to the issue and/or a current event.
- developing an independent investigation of the issue or current event and the media’s influence. For this the student may choose to conduct a current content analysis of media

coverage of the issue to contrast with current public knowledge of the issue. This would require the student to follow current media coverage and to develop a means for assessing current public knowledge.

- drawing conclusions from these inquiries. From this analysis, the student may draw conclusions about the media's influence on the public's opinion and knowledge of the international issue.

Course Policies:

Attendance: It is expected that all students attend every class and be on time. Absences severely handicap the learning process and reflect on the student's ability to meet deadlines. Being late for class interrupts the momentum of the class and distracts other students.

A student may miss three class sessions without penalty; however, on each successive absence, a grade reduction will be made from the course final grade.

Student athletes should discuss their schedules individually with the instructor. There may be occasions where the absence of a student athlete will not be permitted.

Submitting Assignments: Unless otherwise stated, assignments and class exercises are to be handed in during the class. Work assigned for overnight will be due at the beginning of the next class meeting, unless otherwise agreed. No late work will be accepted. Make up work must be agreed upon before an excused absence. Assignments, quizzes or tests missed as a result of absence will only be made up by prior arrangement with the instructor. Without this arrangement, a grade of 0 will be given.

Written Work: All work must be typed with the exception of in-class exercises and journals. All written submissions must be type-written or printer generated, double spaced, 12 point type, Times font, one-inch margins on all edges, with proper use of style notation for page numbers and sections.

Exams: Exams will not be given at any other time than when originally scheduled. Only in extreme circumstances will exams be rescheduled.

Academic Dishonesty: All work submitted by a student must be the student's own work. When quoting other sources, the source used must be properly credited. Failure to do so will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment.

Student Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirement, you must (1) contact the Director of Disability Services, Shirley Deichert, in the Center of Student Success, BSC 288, (717) 361-1227, deichesa@etown.edu, AND (2) meet with me, the instructor, within two weeks of receiving a copy of the accommodation letter from Disability Services to discuss your accommodation needs and their implementation.

Assignments and Projects:

Journal

A journal should be kept in which the student records discussions, impressions and reactions to readings and other assignments, and thoughts about the semester project progression. The journal should be kept so that it may be shared with others during peer review.

Reaction/Opinion Papers (a.k.a. Newswise)

A number of reaction/opinion papers will be written during the course of the semester. These assignments will consist of a brief (3-4 pages) discussion of your reaction or opinion to some

aspect or subject covered in classroom discussion, reading assignments, or colloquium assignments. These papers may be exchanged with fellow class members for peer review and discussion. Any reaction paper may be revised and resubmitted within a week of the date of return. The higher grade will be recorded. The first paper will be evaluated during a workshop. Success on these assignments will be judged on criteria including quality of writing, organization, rigor of content, and critical thinking.

Semester Project (Presentation and Paper)

Each student will write and present a research paper on a topic of interest related to the course topic: media literacy, foreign cultures through the American mass media lens. This paper will be presented in a condensed form to the class on an assigned day. The research paper will be between 20 and 25 pages with a bibliography and prepared in APA format. The formal presentation will be 8 to 10 minutes in length. Details of this assignment and discussion of topics will be given as the semester progresses.

Class Content Analysis Project

As a committee of the whole, the class will come together to conduct an in-depth content analysis of news media coverage of international issues. This project will be defined in class and will require extensive out of class work by each individual student.

Grading:

The final grade for the course will be determined in the following manner:

Reaction/Opinion Papers	20%	A	95-100	C+	77-79
Semester Project Outline	5%	A-	90-94	C	73-76
Semester Project Paper & Presentation	20%	B+	87-89	C-	70-72
Exams	10%	B	83-86	D+	67-69
Final Exam	10%	B-	80-82	D	63-66
Class Participation	10%			D-	60-62
Journal	10%			F	0-59
Class Content Analysis Project	15%				

Readings and Resources (A starter list ... we will add to this as we go along):

Lippmann, Walter. (1922). *The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads*, *Public Opinion*, Macmillan Co.: New York, pp. 3-32.

The Pew Research Center (2006, June 22). *The Great Divide: How Westerners and Muslims view each other*. Pew Global Attitudes Project. Available online: <http://pewglobal.org/>

A World of Possibilities (multiple programs). The Main Street Media Project. Available online: <http://www.aworldofpossibilities.com/>.

- World Wide Wiki: The clamor and chorus of Citizen Journalism
- Smothering Thoughts, Swallowing Tongues: Censorship and self-censorship in the American media
- Global Media and the Conversational Commons: Communication from many to many
- Media as Mediator: Transforming conflict into communication

Otellini, Paul. (2006, January 5). *Keynote address to the 2006 Consumer Electronics Show*. CES, Las Vegas, NV

The reading materials for the course will include traditional mass media resources and new media resources. Assignments will require students to keep current through the use of international, national, and local newspapers, radio broadcasts, television news, as well as Internet resources (web magazines, news services, radio and television sources).

Some On-line International News Sources (English language)

International Herald Tribune	http://www.iht.com/
National Public Radio Online	http://www.npr.org
AJR NewsLink	http://newslink.org/
BBC News	http://news.bbc.co.uk

Students will add to this list of new media resources as the course progresses.

Tentative Class (9:30 to 10:45) and Colloquium (11 to 11:50) Schedule

Day	Date	Description/Discussion	Deadlines
Mon	Aug . 28	Introduction to First Year Seminar & Colloquium Review syllabus and course requirements Media Literacy Quiz Primer: How to write an essay Primer: How to journal	Newswise: “Convocation,” due Aug. 30. Newswise: “Birthday,” due Sept. 6 Begin journaling and media awareness.
Tues	Aug . 29	Colloquium: Convocation, 3:30 p.m., Leffler Chapel.	
Wed	Aug . 30	Class meets from 9:30 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. (Class & colloquium time) Part One: Foundations “What is Media Literacy” Visit to Learning Center	Newswise “Convocation” due.
Mon	Sept . 4	No Classes. Labor Day.	
Wed	Sept . 6	Part Two: Knowledge Structures of Media Content Chapters 5 and 6 Colloquium: Don Davidson, Village Music Circles “A Village Music Circle is a group of people having fun creating simple parts on a chorus of tuned drums, percussion and musical instruments. The simple act of playing music together profoundly teaches the skills inherent in becoming a strong and thriving community.”	Newswise “Birthday” due.
Mon	Sept . 11	Writing workshop in class	Thesis statement for semester project due.
Wed	Sept . 13	Part Two: Knowledge Structures of Media Content Chapters 7 and 8 Colloquium: “The Three Faiths of Abraham: The Hope for Interfaith Dialogue between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam” Reza Aslan, Research Associate at USC’s Center for Public Diplomacy; author of <i>No God but God</i> , former legislative assistant for the Friends’ Committee on National Legislation in Washington, D.C.	Newswise: Reflection on religious issues in international news, due Sept. 20.
Mon	Sept . 18	Part Three: Knowledge Structures in Media Industries Chapters 9 and 10 and Media Literacy VHS (Making the media)	Last day to resubmit reaction paper #1.
Wed	Sept . 20	Part Three: Knowledge Structures in Media Industries Chapters 11 and 12 Colloquium: The Ultimate Road Trip <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding some typical first-year mistakes. Learn about time management, the importance of getting good grades, working relationships with professors, preparing for grad school and seeking future employers, the impact of clubs and organizations, as well as the value of internships. 	Religious issues paper due.

Mon	Sept . 25	Discuss impact of technology and censorship: CES and NPR readings	
Wed	Sept . 27	Library session 1: review of library resources Meet in library classroom (9:30 to 10:50) Prep for exam (11-11:50)	
Mon	Oct. 2	Exam #1 (a simple short answer and short essay exam.)	
Wed	Oct. 4	Primer: How to write a term paper Colloquium: Service-learning program	
Mon	Oct. 9	Library session 2: Internet and new media Meet in library classroom	Outline of semester project due.
Wed	Oct. 11	Discuss content analysis method Sample project (9:30-11:45)	
		Fall Break -- Oct. 12-15	
Mon	Oct. 16	Part Four: Knowledge Structures of Media Effects Lippmann and Pew Study readings	
Wed	Oct. 18	Discussion: Business/economy as an International Issue Colloquium: “From McDonaldization to . . . Starbuckization?” George Ritzer, Sociology, U. of Maryland, author of <i>The McDonaldization of Society</i> . McDonaldization = “the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world”	Newswise: Reflection on Ritzer presentation and international media literacy, due Oct 23.
		Saturday, Oct. 21 -- Homecoming	
Mon	Oct. 23	Content Analysis Activities	Ritzer paper due.
Wed	Oct. 25	Peer counselors advising presentation and session Colloquium: Advising session.	Reaction paper returned.
Mon	Oct. 30	Review for exam #2.	
Wed	Nov . 1	Midterm! Exam #2. A more complex exam - essay questions and some short answer. Colloquium: TBA	Last day to resubmit reaction paper #2.
Mon	Nov . 6	Part Five: Increasing Media Literacy What’s your plan for developing media literacy? Return exam #2.	First draft of semester project paper due.
Wed	Nov . 8	Part Six: Issues in Media Literacy Entertainment and International Issues Colloquium: “Make Love not War: Peace, Sex, and Organized Lethal Conflict” Andrew Murray, Elizabethtown College Alumni Peace Fellow Baker Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, Juniata College	Newswise: Reflection on Murray presentation, due Nov. 13.
Mon	Nov . 13	Preparing to speak. How to develop a term paper into a presentation.	First drafts returned. Murray paper due.

Wed	Nov . 15	Group activity: practice public speaking – in class exercises Colloquium: Human Rights program Samantha Power, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard University, author of <i>A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide</i>	
Mon	Nov . 20	Discussion: Human Rights	
Wed	Nov . 22	NO CLASS. Thanksgiving holiday.	
Mon	Nov . 27	Group work day for class content analysis project	All semester project papers due in class.
Wed	Nov . 29	Peer Counselor Meeting Colloquium: Study Abroad program	Journals due for review.
Mon	Dec. 4	Semester project presentations 1-8 and class discussions	Journals returned
Wed	Dec. 6	Semester project presentations 9-16 and class discussions Last day of class. Review for final examination. Colloquium: FAPA Music program	Class content analysis project due.
Mon	Dec. 11	Final Exam 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Final Exam. Short answer and essays comprehensive.	All semester project papers returned.