

Mass Communication Theories

JOUR 7050-M50

Spring 2014

Tuesday 5:30 – 8:30pm (via Adobe Connect:

Professor: Daphney Pernola Barr

Office: Virtual

Office Hours: T/R, virtually, by appointment

Phone: (864) 229-0391

Email contact: barrd@mailbox.sc.edu

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CATALOGUE/COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Key concepts and development of theories offered to explain operation and effects of mass communication media; multidiscipline overview of theories dealing with advertising, broadcasting, print, and public relations messages, media, and effects.

COURSE ORGANIZATION:

This course introduces a range of mass communication theories relevant to both “old” and “new” media. The course will follow each theory from its beginnings to its current use within research. Additionally, the course will focus on applying mass communication theory to current mass communication practices and developments. The goal of the course is to understand what constitutes a theory, how mass communication theory is developed, and how mass communication theory can be applied to help understand mass media and communication.

PREREQUISITE:

None

TEXTBOOKS: There are no required textbooks for this semester. Course readings will be available via email. A tentative list of readings is included in the syllabus; course readings may be altered during the semester. The readings include original articles serving as the roots of a particular mass communication theory/perspective.

CLASSROOM FORMAT: Graduate seminar style: instructor leads lecture and facilitates class discussion.

GRADING:

- **Weekly reading commentary, Mondays by 5pm (CT)** **15%**
 - While all students are expected to read all required readings before class, each person will be assigned a specific reading on which to write a commentary.
 - Each posting counts toward a participation grade.

- **Theory Evolution Paper** **15%**
 - Students will write a mid-length theory evolution paper detailing the development of the theory from its beginnings, how it has evolved, and its use in current research
 - The paper should include major works using the theory, including the original

writings as well as persons whom have developed definitive research using the theories

- The paper should reflect graduate level writing that includes clear, concise writing using proper mechanics, grammar, and spelling with zero typographical errors. APA style is preferred; Chicago style is acceptable.
 - The paper must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document (.docx, .doc, .rtf).
- **Theory Application Paper Proposal: “Old Theory, New Media”** **15%**
 - Students will develop a proposal for a research paper that applies a mass communication theory to analyze a phenomenon in both “old” and “new” media with the purpose of demonstrating if and how mass communication theories are applicable across mediums
 - The proposal should include the paper’s topic, the phenomenon being analyzed, rationale for the theory being used, rationale for the two mediums that are chosen, and a near-complete literature review
 - The same writing expectations for the Evolution paper also apply to this one.
- **Theory Application Paper Presentation** **15%**
 - On the last day of class, students will present their final papers in a formal 12 – 15 minute conference quality presentation.
 - A five minute Q&A will follow with questions from both classmates and the instructor.
 - Further details will be discussed as the time approaches.
- **Theory Application Paper: “Old Theory, New Media”** **40%**
 - Complete Theory Application paper including full literature review and complete analysis of phenomenon under investigation
 - The same writing expectations apply.

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
Week 1			
21-Jan	Course Introduction		
Week 2			
28-Jan	Social Sciences and Conceptualization	Hage (1972), Ch. 1,2; Chaffee (1991), Ch. 1,2; Blalock (1969), Ch. 1,2	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 3			
4-Feb	History of Communication Research	Delia (1987); McAnany (1988); Rowland (1988); Rogers (1986), Ch. 3; Czitrom (1982), Ch. 4,5	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 4			

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
11-Feb	Media Effects	Gerbner and Gross (1976); Hirsch (1980); Hirsch (1981a); Gerber et al. (1981a); Hirsch (1981b); Gerbner et al. (1981b); Noelle-Neuman (1973); Tichenor et al. (1970); Gaziano (1983); Meyrowitz (1985); Linz, Donnerstein, and Adams (1989); Donnerstein, Wilson, and Linz (1992)	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 5			
18-Feb	Social Cognition Theory	Berger and Luckman (1967), Ch. 3; Bandura (1986), Ch. 2; Fiske and Taylor (1991), Ch. 4	WRITTEN COMMENTARY; EVOLUTION PAPER DUE BY 5:30 PM (CT)
Week 6			
25-Feb	Uses & Gratifications; Media Dependency	Katz et al. (1974); Levy and Windahl (1985); Webster and Phalen (1997); Ball-Rokeach et al. (1984) Ch. 1,4,5; Ball-Rokeach (1985); Ball-Rokeach (1988); Horton and Wohl (1956)	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 7			
4-Mar	Gatekeeping, Agenda Setting, Framing	McCombs and Shaw (1972); Epstein (1974) Ch. 1 Gans (1979), Ch. 5; Gitlin (1980), Ch. 10; Grunig (1976); Reese (2001)	
Week 8			
11-Mar	NO CLASS--SPRING BREAK		
Week 9			
18-Mar	Political Economy of Media & Communication	Williams (1980); Garnham (1979); Garnham (1983); Neuman (1991)	WRITTEN COMMENTARY; THEORY APPLICATION PAPER PROPOSAL DUE BY 5:30 PM (CT)
Week 10			

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
25-Mar	Critical & Cultural Theories	Bagdikian (1989); Schramm (1964), Ch. 1,4; Schiller (1988)	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 11			
1-Apr	Communication & Ideology		WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 12			
8-Apr	Diffusion of Innovations	Rogers (1983), Ch. 1; Roling et al. (1976); McAnany (1984); Markus (1987); Fulk et al. (1987); McCombs and Nolan (1992)	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 13			
15-Apr	Technology & Communication	Innis (1951), Ch. 4,5; McLuhan (TBD)	WRITTEN COMMENTARY
Week 14			
22-Apr	NO CLASS--THEORY PAPER		
Week 15			
29-Apr	NO CLASS--THEORY PAPER		
Week 16			
6-May	THEORY APPLICATION PAPER PRESENTATIONS		PAPER PRESENTATIONS; THEORY APPLICATION PAPER DUE BY 5 PM (CT)

ASSESSMENT

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOUR 7050-M50 / MASS

COMMUNICATION THEORY:

- Explore theory development
- Explore broad range of mass communication theory
- Explore the basic principles and purposes of mass communication theory
- Explore the evolution and development of mass communication theory
- Understand the application of mass communication theory to all forms of mass media and communication

HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:

Cognitive Objectives To Be Mastered (Ability To Explain, Analyze, Understand, Think Critically):

- Develop an understanding of what constitutes theory in general, mass communication theory specifically
- Understand how mass communication has developed and is applied within research
- Understand how mass communication theory is applicable to all forms of mass media and mass communication

Performance Standards To Be Met (Demonstrable Skills, Abilities, Techniques, Applied Competencies):

- Students will actively facilitate and participate in class discussions, contributing to understanding mass communication theory and its application
- All students will read all class readings, additional journal articles pertaining to selected mass communication theories, and each student will post commentary about *one* of that week's readings to the UM drive (??).
- Students will write one theory evolution paper, detailing the development and evolution of a specific mass communication theory and how it has been and continues to be applied
- Students will develop a theory application research paper proposal and write a critical research paper containing a comprehensive literature review that analyzes a mass communication theory and applies the theory to a phenomenon found in both "old" and "new" media.

HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR THEORIES:

Assignments will be assessed based on mastery of skills detailed above.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be to

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;

- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:

The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation. Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

- Awareness: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- Understanding: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- Application: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

EMAIL:

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

CELLPHONES:

You must turn them off during class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence due to illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

“Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.” (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DISABILITY:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Services at (901) 678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.