

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

431.11 Introduction to Communications and Media

3 credit hours

Fall 2010

Dr. Nicholas P. Greco

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Tuesday, 11:10-12:25; Friday, 11:10-12:25.

Office Hours: Tuesday, 8:30-11:00; Friday, 8:30-11:00 or by appointment.

SYLLABUS

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the various types of contemporary public communications media and their histories, examines media audiences and identifies some pertinent issues which surround Canadian media in particular. These include globalization, regulation and ownership of media properties.

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through participation in lectures, classroom discussion and completion of the course requirements:

1. The student will be familiar with the major elements of the field of mass communications. For instance, the student will understand the roles of communication within society, primarily in the Canadian context;
2. The student will understand the various ways in which media content might be discussed, within the realm of communication theory;
3. The student will become familiar with the institutional structures within which media operate, particularly within the Canadian context. These structures include laws, policies, as well as issues of ownership and technology.

C. COURSE TEXTS

Required: Campbell, Richard, Christopher R. Martin & Bettina Fabos, *Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication*. 7th Edition. 2011 Update. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. 2011.

Required: Muehlhoff, Tim & Todd V. Lewis. *Authentic Communication: Christian Speech Engaging Culture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2010.

Recommended: Lorimer, Roland, Mike Gasher and David Skinner. *Mass Communication in Canada*. Sixth Edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press. 2008.

D. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class attendance, participation and reading of the course texts: It is only in the best interest of the student if he or she attends each class and, in fact, consistent attendance is required. Each student will be expected to read the assigned course texts and be prepared to contribute to a meaningful discussion based on those readings. It is on this participation that a portion of the final grade is based. Each student is expected to arrive to class promptly for its beginning.
2. Midterm Tests: There will be two midterm tests, consisting of short answer questions and an essay question. They will cover material from both lectures and readings.
3. Major Paper Proposal: Each student must prepare a 1-2 page major paper proposal for approval by the instructor. The proposal should include a thesis statement or idea and state a particular medium or element of communications and media which falls within the range of the course. For instance, one might want to explore the history of a specific medium and discuss the social and cultural implications or impacts of that medium. The proposal should include a short bibliography, consisting of 5 to 8 academic sources. This assignment should serve to help the student begin to think about the major paper, and ideally get a substantial start on it.
4. Major Paper: The major paper should be the realization of the proposal submitted for approval earlier in the term. The essay should demonstrate a critical engagement with the proposed topic and the integration of course materials and concepts. The student should be particularly careful to avoid "cause and effect" papers. The paper should be 6-8 pages in length.
5. Final Exam: The final exam will cover material from readings and lectures over the length of the entire course.

E. GRADING SUMMARY

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|---------------------------|-----|
| Attendance/Participation: | 10% |
| Two Midterm Tests: | 30% |
| Major Paper Proposal: | 5% |
| Major Paper: | 25% |
| Final Exam: | 30% |

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|-----------|----|-----|--------|--------------|----|-----|-------|
| Excellent | A+ | 4.0 | 91-100 | Satisfactory | C+ | 2.5 | 67-69 |
| | A | | 85-90 | Adequate | C | 2.0 | 63-66 |
| | A- | | 80-84 | | C- | | 60-62 |
| Very Good | B+ | 3.5 | 77-79 | Marginal | D+ | 1.0 | 57-59 |
| Good | B | 3.0 | 73-76 | | D | | 53-56 |
| | B- | | 70-72 | | D- | | 50-52 |
| | | | | Failure | F | 0.0 | <50 |

F. COURSE POLICIES

Full text to the academic policies, procedures and regulations of Providence College can be found online in the Student Handbook (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/student_life/) and the College Academic Calendar (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/programs/registrars_office/calendar/).

1. Assignment Formatting: All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, using Times New Roman font (12-point only), with 1-inch margins on all four sides of the page. In addition, the text must be left-justified. Proper page numbering must be indicated on each page. Written assignments may be double-sided. The text should also be free of errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. The paper should be stapled together at the top left corner, without any type of plastic or paper binding. **Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a loss of marks.**

2. Class Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory. Missing more than 5 classes **for any reason** will result in a failing grade in the course.

3. Late Assignment Policy: Assignments are due immediately at the beginning of class on the date on which they are due. Assignments not remitted at that time will be accepted by hand or in my mailbox with a 10% penalty only until 4:30pm on the day that the assignment is due. Any assignments turned in after 4:30pm of the due day will be accepted but will receive a grade of 0. As there will be no extensions granted for any assignments, please note their due dates.

4. Plagiarism: Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all its various forms, and will be held accountable for doing so by the policy on Academic Conduct in the Student Handbook (http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/student_life/). One particularly problematic breach of academic integrity is plagiarism, which is stealing from the ideas and writings of another person and passing them off as one's own. For an elaboration of the nature, types, and prevention of plagiarism, see the Providence College document entitled "Academic Dishonesty: The Problem of Plagiarism in Academic Writing," in the Providence College Academic Formation Guide available in the Bookstore.

5. Final Exam Policy: All requests to have a final exam rescheduled must be approved by the Academic Committee in accordance with the Examination General Regulations (available in the College Academic Calendar at http://www.providencecollege.ca/college/programs/registrars_office/calendar/).

6. Missed Exams: Students who miss exams other than a final exam are responsible to contact the professor within one week of the exam date if they still wish to write the exam. Permission to do so will be given to only those students who present evidence or reasonable grounds acceptable to the professor for having missed the exam. The format of the exam will be at the discretion of the professor, with essay questions likely. Students who do not write an exam by at most two weeks after the exam date will receive a grade of zero for that component of the course.

Exceptions to final exams must be processed by appeal to the Academic Committee.

7. Information and Communication Technologies in the Classroom: **Student use of information and communication technologies for purposes other than class note-taking is not allowed in the classroom, as students are expected to give their total attention to class activities.** Use of cell-phones or iPods is never appropriate in the classroom, and use of laptop computers to play games, chat with others, browse the internet, or engage material not related to the class is always distracting to classmates and disrespectful to the instructor. Unlike some other post-secondary institutions, Providence has not yet found it necessary to ban laptops from the classroom, or prevent wireless internet access in classrooms. Only judicious use of them will keep it that way.

This is a Communications and Media class. As such, the exploration of new communication technologies is encouraged. However, unauthorized use of laptops and other information and communication technologies in this class will not be tolerated.

G. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Journal of Cultural and Religious Theory <<http://www.jcrt.org>>

Journal of Religion and Popular Culture <<http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/>>

Stream: Culture/Politics/Technology - A Graduate Journal of Communication
<<http://www.streamjournal.org/index.php/stream>>

Topia: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies <<http://www.yorku.ca/topia/>>

H. COURSE OUTLINE

September 10: Introduction to Communications & Media

September 14: A Critical Approach to Mass Media

Campbell, Ch.1

Muehlhoff, Ch.1

September 17: Cultural Approaches to Research

Campbell, Ch.15

September 21: Perspective Taking

Muehlhoff, Ch.2

September 24: Radio

Campbell, Ch.4

September 28: Words and Language

Muehlhoff, Ch.3

October 1: Television

Campbell, Ch.5

October 5: Persuasion

Muehlhoff, Ch.4

October 8: **NO CLASSES - THANKSGIVING BREAK**

October 12: Movies

Campbell, Ch.7

October 15: **NO CLASS**

- October 19: **MIDTERM #1**
- October 22: Conflict and Christian Unity
Muehlhoff, Ch. 5
- October 26: Newspapers
Campbell, Ch.8
- October 29: Forgiveness
Muehlhoff, Ch.6
- November 2: Magazines
Campbell, Ch.9
- November 5: Popular Culture
Muehlhoff, Ch.7
MAJOR PAPER PROPOSAL DUE
- November 9: Books
Campbell, Ch.10
- November 12: **MIDTERM #2**
- November 16: Christians as Counterpublics
Muehlhoff, Ch.8
- November 19: Advertising
Campbell, Ch.11
- November 23: **FACULTY FORUM**
- November 26: Postmodernism
Muehlhoff, Ch.9 & 10
- November 30: Public Relations
Campbell, Ch.12
MAJOR PAPER DUE
- December 3: Argument Culture
Muehlhoff, Ch.11

December 7: Globalization
Campbell, Ch.13

December 10: New Media Technologies
Campbell, Ch.2