

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:

3/0/3

CN 3521 .COMMUNICATION THEORIES

LEVEL 5

UK CREDITS: 15

(Updated: Fall 2015)

PREREQUISITES:

WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing
WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing and Ethics
WP 1212 Academic Writing and Research
CN 2301 Contemporary Mass Communication
CN 2408 Issues in Context

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

The basic theoretical paradigms of mass communication. Examination of the history and development of models in communication research and the context in which theories emerged. Exploration of approaches used to understand the influence of mass communication.

RATIONALE:

Students will gain a deeper understanding of the key concepts and theoretical approaches to the study of mass communication, including media effects, agenda setting, propaganda and mass society theory. The topics covered will give students the grounding they will need for the readings in the Communication Seminar.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After taking this course students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the major communication theories and key concepts relevant to the field of communication.
2. Demonstrate awareness of the diversity of approaches to understanding communication, media and culture in both historical and contemporary contexts, and of the uses and significance of those approaches.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the dynamics of media discourses in the shaping of culture and social attitudes.
4. Select and apply arguments and positions related to media theory to examine a contemporary issue or phenomenon in concerning the mass media
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the regulatory frameworks that affect media and cultural production and consumption.

**METHOD OF
TEACHING AND
LEARNING:**

In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

- Classes consist of lectures and class discussions.
- Office Hours: Students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their instructor, where they can ask questions about their own original articles and go over lecture material
- Use of a Blackboard site, where instructors post lecture notes, journal articles, assignment instructions, announcements and additional resources.

ASSESSMENT:

Class tests. formative	0	Short answer questions
Assignment summative	40	A 2,000 word essay (1 question from a list of choices)
Final examination (2 hour comprehensive) summative	60	Short answer questions and long answer questions

The assignment tests learning outcome 4

The final examination tests learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 5

REQUIRED MATERIAL:

Severin, Werner, and Tankard, James.

Communication Theories: Origins, Methods and Uses in the Mass Media. Wadsworth Publishing, 2009.

FURTHER READINGS:

Baran, Stanley. and Davis, Dennis. *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future.* Wadsworth Publishing 2008.

Defleur, Melvin. *Theories of Mass Communication : Explaining Origins, Processes, and Effects.* Allyn and Bacon 2009.

RECOMMENDED:

Baran, Stanley. *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture.* McGraw-Hill Higher Education 2010.

McQuail, Dennis. *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction* Sage Publications 2010.

WWW RESOURCES:

<http://mcs.sagepub.com/>
<http://ijoc.org/ojs/index.php/ijoc/index>
<http://ejc.sagepub.com/>
<http://acjournal.org>

SOFTWARE

REQUIREMENTS: Word

COMMUNICATION

REQUIREMENTS: All class discussions and assignments using good English.

INDICATIVE

CONTENT OUTLINE:

1. Introduction to Communication Theory

- 1.1 Defining the Field: Communication, Mass Communication, Mass Media
- 1.2 The characteristics of mass communication
- 1.3 The role of theory
- 1.4 The goals of mass communication theory
- 1.5 Alternative Traditions of Theoretical Analysis

2. Models of Mass Communication

- 2.1 Shannon and Weaver's Mathematical Theory of Communication
- 2.2 Lasswell's model

3. Theories of Perception

- 3.1 Definitions of Perception
- 3.2 Why do mass communicators want audiences to pay attention to their messages?
- 3.3 Structural and Functional influences on perception
- 3.4 Selective perception, selective exposure, selective attention, selective retention.
- 3.5 Experiments in perception

4. Theories of Persuasion

- 4.1 Definitions: attitudes and beliefs
- 4.2 The concept and components of an attitude
- 4.3 Inter-attitudinal and intra-attitudinal structures
- 4.4 The history of attitude change research

5. Theories of Propaganda

- 5.1 Origins/history of propaganda
- 5.2 Definitions of propaganda
- 5.3 The objectives of propaganda
- 5.4 The techniques of propaganda
- 5.5 Video: *The Eternal Jew* (1940)

6. Communication and Culture

- 6.1 The Frankfurt School and Critical Cultural Theory
- 6.2 Identity and Mass Media

7. Media Effects

- 7.1 Magic Bullet theory/Hypodermic Needle theory
- 7.2 The limited effects model: Klapper's generalisations
- 7.3 Interpersonal Communication: Two Step Flow theory
- 7.4 Cultivation Theory

8. Approaches to Audiences

- 8.1 Uses and Gratifications theory
- 8.2 Reception Analysis

9. Agenda Setting Theory

- 9.1 Framing
- 9.2 Agenda Building

10. Four Theories of the Press

- 10.1 Authoritarian
- 10.2 Libertarian
- 10.3 Social Responsibility
- 10.4 Soviet-Totalitarian

11. Media Globalization

- 11.1 Ownership and Control
- 11.2 Technology and Culture

12. New Media and Communication

- 12. 1 Concepts and Constructs
- 13. 2 Political Participation, New Media and Democracy