**Media in the Digital Age** (’17 Fall)

COMM214-07, 08, 09 MWF 10:00-10:50, RSS 235

COMM214-10, 11, 12 MWF 11:00-11:50, RSS 235

**Course Instructor:**  Xi Cui, PhD

**E-mail: cuix@cofc.edu**

**Phone: 843-953-8128** (email is usually the best way to reach me)

**Office Hours:** MWF 1-3 pm or by appointment

**Office:** 305,7 College Way

**Grading:** Letter; 4 Credit Hours

**Website:** lms.cofc.edu \*Additional course readings will be available on OAKS.

Tutorial of OAKS can be found at <http://blogs.cofc.edu/oaks/>; IT Helpdesk: 843-953-3375

**Required Texts and Materials**

Campbell, R., Martin, C. R., & Fabos, B. (2016). *Media Essentials: A Brief Introduction* (3nd ed.). Boston, MA: Bedford St. Martin's.

Supplemental materials will be available in OAKS -> Content, visit lms.cofc.edu

**Course Learning Objectives**

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| --- |
| Ever wondered why CBS shows aren’t available on Hulu? Why your Facebook timeline is not always chronological? Why some churches support lobbying FCC against the abolishment of Network Neutrality principle? Why Asian men in Hollywood stories are rarely involved in romance while Asian women almost always are? Navigating our daily lives demands media literacy: the ability to analyze the mediated messages we engage with and to proficiently create our own. The purpose of this course is the genesis of this literacy.  By the end of this course, students will be able to:   1. Explain the core theoretical perspectives that guide our understanding of mediated communication and how it impacts us in our daily lives; 2. Identify and explain the major trends and challenges facing the media industries in the digital age; 3. Provide examples of the complex relationship between media and culture; 4. Describe the historical patterns of mass media development that explain how “new media” interact with “old media;” 5. Demonstrate media literacy skills by understanding and analyzing personal media habits.   In addition, as COMM 214 fulfills the requirements for social science credit in the general education curriculum at the College of Charleston, this course requires you to:   * Apply social science concepts, models, or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions, or social institutions.   This learning outcome will be assessed with an essay question in the final exam. |

# **Course Organization**

In this course, we will look at the interactions among technological, business, cultural and regulatory factors in the shaping of the contemporary media landscape. We will discuss what roles we as consumers and citizens have played and into which we “have been played.” We hope to disentangle the moral, ethical, social and cultural implications of the media and our consumption behaviors. *Meanwhile, as we consider how multiple* media [Yes, media is the plural form of medium] *intertwine, we will emphasize four interrelated questions during four interrelated ‘debate’ units*:

* **Print Media:** Are written media a declining standard or a revitalized essential?
* **Broadcast Media:** Do mass media expand our world or disengage our minds?
* **Digital Media:** Do social media facilitate powerful participation or narcissistic malaise?
* **Media and the Public:** Are our media tools for public silence or public voice?

We will use this debate structure to highlight five central themes throughout the course:

* **History:** critical events, figures, and developments that shape our understanding of mediated communication today.
* **Industry:** the state of media as a business, issues of ownership and labor, legal issues and challenges.
* **Culture:** media texts as shapers of society, critical perspectives on the politics of media, structure and agency, democratic expression.
* **Literacy:** our ability to both critically decode the media content we consume and effectively produce content of our own.
* **Agency:** the exercise of our autonomy and intention vis-a-vis the structural factors of media.

This organization guides all four of our course hours each week. Lecture in 214 will use core readings to establish interrelations between our debates and central themes. Discussion in your smaller 214D sections will ask you to grapple with the same debates and themes individually and with your peers. Participation in both 214 lectures and 214D discussions is essential to fully engage these debates and themes.

**Assignments**

COMM214 contains assignments totaling 1000 points, broken down as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment:** | **Points:** | **Grading Scale:** |  |
| Exams |  |  |  |
| Unit Exam 1 | 150 | 1000-950: A | 769.9-730: C |
| Unit Exam 2 | 150 | 949.9-900: A- | 729.9-700: C- |
| Final Exam | 150 | 899.9-870: B+ | 699.9-670: D+ |
| Group Reflection Assignment | 50 | 869.9-830: B | 669.9-630: D |
| Participation | 150 | 829.9-800: B- | 629-600: D- |
| Reading Responses | 150 (30\*5) | 799.9-770: C+ | 599-0: F |
| Discussion Section Points | 200 | A: **outstanding** work | |
| **TOTAL** | **1000** | B: **quality** work | |
| Extra Credit |  | C: **acceptable** work | |
| *#MYCOMM214* | 20 | D:**minimally passing** work | |
| *Slanted Screen* | 20 | F: **less than passing** work | |
| *Personal Meeting* | 10 |  | |
|  |  |  |  |

**Unit Exams:** Twice throughout the semester, we will have unit exams covering the readings, my lecture and the discussion materials of corresponding modules. These exams will test your understanding and application of fundamental course concepts. The format will be multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay.

**Final Exam:** At the end of the semester, we will have a final exam covering cumulative concepts from throughout the semester.

**Lecture Participation:** Participation in lecture will account for 150 points. COMM 214 is an interactive class. Regular class attendance is the bare minimum. Participation in course activities and discussions will help us become better critical thinkers and more savvy media users. The participation grade will consist of 10 small assessments, 15 points each. The assessments can take the form of pop-quizzes, roll call, peer evaluations of “flipped classroom” presentations, etc. For details about the “flipped classroom,” see the rubrics document in OAKS-Content.

**Reading Responses:** 150 points of 1000 total will come from five 30-point reading responses due throughout the semester (one from each unit). The five readings requiring responses are:

* **Orientation:** Nancy K. Baym, “Making New Media Make Sense” (due 09/08).
* **Print Media:** Pricilla Coit Murphy, “Books are Dead; Long Live Books” (due 09/22).
* **Broadcast Media:** David Croteau, William Hoynes & Stefiana Milan, “Media and Ideology” (due 10/11).
* **Digital Media:** H. Jenkins, S. Ford & J. Green, “What Constitutes Meaningful Participation?” (due 10/27).
* **Media and the Public:** Robert Putnam, “Technology and Mass Media” (due 12/20).

Each response will be 300-400 words, including a synthesis of the reading and your response to the reading. See the rubrics in OAKS-Content for detail. We will discuss the reading responses in more detail before the first one is due.

**#MyCOMM214**: Throughout the semester, you can treat anything related to this course using #MyCOMM214 on Twitter. Your tweet will show up in our OAKS homepage. You are also highly encouraged to read and respond to your classmate’s tweets. The five students who receive most retweet, favorite, and replies on Twitter will receive 20 points at the end of the semester. So tweet interesting stuff and keep your audience engaged. That’s the media way to have fun!

**RESPONSES TO *THE SLANTED SCREEN***: the last class before Fall Break, we will watch a documentary called The Slanted Screen. You can choose to write a short response to the film for 20 points extra credit.

**PERSONAL MEETING**: As your instructor, I would like to know you better. This will help me understand what you are interested, why you think about media, how you learn, etc. Before September 1 (Friday), you can come to my office hour to personally introduce yourself to me. You will receive 10 points for this short visit. But only before September 1st.

**\*RUBRICS: Detailed explanations and the rubrics of the assignments are in Rubrics.docx in OAKS-Content.**

**Course Requirements**

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class period. Attendance is required. You may have One unexcused absences. College-excused absences must be documented upon your return to class. For each unexcused absence in excess of ONE, your grade of class participation will be reduced by 50 points. Unexcused absences on presentation or assignment due days will result in zero (0) being recorded for your assignment grade. Attendance records will be based on random attendance checking or writing activities in class.

**Late Work:** You are responsible for knowing the due dates of assignments and your presentation day. I will not be able to accept late assignments unless you have a college-sanctioned excuse. Assignments may always be completed earlier than the deadline, but any late assignment will receive a ZERO.

**Grade Feedback:** All course concerns should be addressed either during office appointments or—if it is a very quick matter—just after class. Concerns should not be expressed in front of an audience during class time. Due to the large lecture format of COMM 214, all exams will be kept in my office after their completion. We will discuss commonly-missed questions in class, but exams will not be redistributed. Inquiries about specific grades should be made in person during office hours or scheduled meetings. If you have any questions or need any clarification about your grade, make an appointment within one week of the grade being posted to OAKS. After that week, I will not reassess grades.

**Honor Code:** Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.  
Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.  
Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.  
Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.  
Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php

**“Netiquette”:** Even though we live in this highly digital world dramatically different from years ago, there’s inevitably cultural continuity in our everyday rituals in human societies. I would expect your emails and assignment submissions in OAKS to be a formal and articulated messages, including a succinct subject line (so I know what the message is about), greetings (so I know to whom this message is addressed), who you are (name and class you take with me), grammatical error-free message, and signature. I refuse to reply any message that is not clearly intended for me.

**Assignment Requirements:** All of your paper assignments will be submitted via the assignments tool in OAKS. Please make sure you have successfully attached your document before submitting it to me.

* Please do not turn assignments in to me in person or through e-mail – the digital submission in OAKS is the ONLY way I will accept the course papers.
* Mandatory format for all submitted assignments: 12-point Times New Roman font, double- spaced on 8.5 X 11 inch white paper with 1-inch margins on all sides. All assignments must follow APA style and electronic submissions must be submitted as Word documents (.doc or .docx). I cannot accept assignments which are unreadable; you will not receive credit and will not be able to re-submit such assignments.

**Course Schedule**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week: | Date: | Lecture Topic/Module: | Required Texts: | Discussion Sections: |
| 1 | W 08/23 | Orientation: | Get Acquainted | NO 214D MEETING |
|  | F 08/25 | Orientation: | ME 1: A Critical Approach |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | M 08/28 | Orientation |  | 214D Orientation |
|  | W 08/30 | Orientation: |  |  |
|  | F 09/01 | Orientation: | ME 15: Media Research |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | M 09/04 | Orientation: |  | Who’s Using Whom? |
|  | W 09/06 | Orientation: |  |  |
|  | **~~F 09/08~~** |  | **Baym** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | ~~M 09/11~~ |  |  | ~~Media Artifacts~~ |
|  | ~~W 09/13~~ |  |  |  |
|  | F 09/15 | Orientation: |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | M 09/18 | Print Media: | ME 2: Books | Look Who’s Talking |
|  | W 09/20 | Print Media: |  |  |
|  | F 09/22 | Print Media: | ME 3: Newspapers |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | M 09/25 | Print Media: |  | Print Media Debate |
|  | W 09/27 | Print Media: |  |  |
|  | **F 09/29** | **Print Media:** | **Coit Murphy** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | **M 10/02** | **UNIT EXAM** | **ME 1, 2, 3, 15** | Presentation Work Day |
|  | W 10/04 | Broadcast Media: | ME 6: Radio |  |
|  | F 10/06 | Broadcast Media: |  |  |
|  | Sat 10/07 | Broadcast Media: |  |  |
| 8 | M 10/09 | Broadcast Media: | ME 8: Television | Theory Presentations |
|  | W 10/11 | Broadcast Media: |  |  |
|  | F 10/13 | Broadcast Media: |  |  |
|  | Sun 10/15 | No Class for COMM214 |  |  |
| 9 | **M 10/16** | **Broadcast Media:** | **Croteau, Hoynes & Milan,** Gerbner | No 214D Meeting |
|  | **W10/18** | **Broadcast Media:** | ME 7: Movies; **Movie Response** |  |
|  | F 10/20 | Broadcast Media: |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | M 10/23 | Digital Media: | ME 9: The Internet | Broadcast Media Debate |
|  | W 10/25 | Digital Media: |  |  |
|  | **F 10/27** | **Digital Media:** | **Jenkins, Ford & Green;** boyd |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | M 10/30 | Digital Media: |  | Unplugged |
|  | **W 11/01** | **UNIT EXAM** | **ME: 6, 7, 8, 9** |  |
|  | **F 11/03** | **Pause and Reflect** | **Group Assignment** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | M 11/06 | Media & the Public | Group Assignment Continued; ME 12: PR | Digital Media Debate |
|  | W 11/08 | Media & the Public |  |  |
|  | F 11/10 | Media & the Public: |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | M 11/13 | Media & the Public: | ME 14: Media Economics | Who Owns What? |
|  | W 11/15 | Media & the Public: |  |  |
|  | F 11/17 | Media & the Public: |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | **M 11/20** | **Media & the Public:** | **Putnam** | NO 214D MEETING |
|  | W 11/22 | Thanksgiving |  |  |
|  | F 11/24 | Thanksgiving |  |  |
|  | | | | |
| 15 | M 11/27 | Media & the Public: | ME 13: Control & Expression | Media & Public Debate |
|  | W 11/29 | Media & the Public: |  |  |
|  | F 12/01 | Media & the Public: |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | M 12/04 | Media & the Public: |  |  |
|  |  | Review and Reflect |  |  |
|  |  | No Class | Exam Prep |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Final Exam | **Section 07, 08, 09: F 12/08 8:00am**  **Section 10, 11, 12: M 12/11 12:00pm** | | |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**\* Items in bold are exams or assignments and their due dates.**

**Additional Readings**

The following citations correspond with a last name listed on the course schedule on the next page. The primary course text, *Media Essentials*, is listed on the course schedule as an *ME* next to the assigned chapter**.** Accompanying texts can be accessed on OAKS as a PDF or via URL below. All readings are to be completed before their corresponding class meeting. **Readings in bold here and on the course schedule mark reading responses that are due at the beginning of class on their assigned date.**

* **Baym, Nancy. (2015). Making new media make sense. In *Personal Connections in the Digital Age* (2nd ed., pp. 24-56). Cambridge, UK: Polity.**
* **boyd, danah. (2014). Addiction: What makes teens obsessed with social media? In *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens* (pp. 77-99). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.**
* **Coit Murphy, Priscilla. (1999). Books are dead, long live books. Paper presented at the MIT Media in Transition Conference, Cambridge, MA.** <http://web.mit.edu/m-i-t/articles/index_murphy.html>
* **Croteau, David, Hoynes, William, & Milan, Stefiana. (2012). Media and ideology. In *Media Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences* (4th ed., pp. 153-184). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.**
* **Jenkins, Henry, Ford, Sam, & Green, Joshua. (2013). What constitutes meaningful participation? In *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (pp. 153-194). New York: New York University Press.**
* **Putnam, Robert. (2000). Technology and mass media. In *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (pp. 216-246). New York: Simon & Schuster.**

**STUDENT RESOURCES**

**OAKS:** In this course, we rely heavily on OAKS—an online course management system—for up-to-date information on assignments, due dates, readings, and grades. Emails sent to you will come to the email address you have associated with OAKS. It is necessary that everyone enrolled in this course obtains access to and uses OAKS throughout the semester.You can access OAKS at <https://lms.cofc.edu/>.

**Writing Lab**: I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants can help with writing for all courses; they offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, please call 843.953.5635 or visit <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/>

**Libraries:** Addlestone Library is a multimedia public space with resources to help you engage course material. Whether researching for a paper, meeting with a group, or looking for a quiet place to study, the library is a vital site of intellectual engagement. And librarians are always eager to help. On top of in-person help, they are also available to assist electronically at <http://library.cofc.edu>.

**Center for Disability Services:** This course and the College of Charleston will gladly make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students needing accommodation should apply at the Center for Disability Services. Students approved for accommodation are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me at least one week before any accommodation is needed. More information can be found at <http://disabilityservices.cofc.edu>.

**Center for Student Learning:** The College of Charleston’s Center for Student Learning is a free resource for students interested in academic assistance in a multitude of areas. Use of its writing and speaking labs are helpful tools for assignments and presentations in discussion section. Study skills seminars and tutoring services will help with lectures. For more information, visit <http://csl.cofc.edu>.

**Title IX:** College of Charleston seeks to provide an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have been the victim of sexual harassment/misconduct/assault, we encourage you to report this to the college's Title IX Director, Kimberly Gertner, (843) 953-5754, gertnerka@cofc.edu. If you report to a faculty member, she or he must notify the Title IX Director about the basic facts of the incident.