

D. DETAILED OUTLINE:

In this step, we will discuss in detail each component and its requirements within the assignment.

1. CHOOSING YOUR CASE STUDY:

Before conducting your deep-dive research, first you need to select your text. This is considered the tricky part of the assignment, as the quality of your artifact will decide, for the most part, your theories and your analysis structure. You can choose from a vast number of media fields, from politics, literature, music to history, television and sports - as long as the field of work features the presence of mediated content. It must also relate to Vietnam's **contemporary** culture and societal settings, so an artifact representing the country or its regions' real-life experiences works best. Avoid materials from the past (older than 10 years old) or describing future predictions. Learning from the article regarding the single case study format will show you the prominent criteria for picking a subject:

- *Triangulation:* you need to corroborate various sources from different platforms to form your proof. This translates to a thorough but brief research throughout all possible platforms you think content regarding your topic is present. For example, if yours is a television program, then potential avenues include streaming service websites, online articles/reviews, social media campaigns (from official accounts of the series), social media discussions (posts/comments from fans/followers), blogs, podcasts, interviews, etc.
- *Case study database:* while the article suggests notes by investigators, case study files and transcripts, you should understand this part as looking for other case studies that have touched on this topic. Not only will you locate similar ideas or approaches, but more often than not you will find that these previous researches propose new angles for succeeding papers.
- *Chain of evidence:* build your network of evidence by making sure each connection made can be seen by the lecturer/marker. From the triangulation process, you should do a preliminary research by collecting 1 artifact from each platform you can find. This adds to your variety and diversity of evidence.

Only when you have collected enough evidence should you continue with the following step.

2. CHOOSING YOUR THEORIES/MODELS/PARADIGMS:

Preceding the application of any theory, research questions must be raised because according to their direction you will be composing your answer toward. They are one of the most pivotal sections and its form varies based on 'the type of research you're conducting, the topic, and the research problem' (McCombes 2022). Your research type should be that of qualitative research. More information on research questions [here](#). A sample research question might be: "How has the film 'Lật Mặt 6' portrayed Vietnam's societal problems and promoted civil values simultaneously?".

The word count for this research paper is 1,500 to 2,500 words. If you go for a shorter word count, then 1 theory/model/paradigm should be enough, whereas a longer essay can accommodate 2.

Overall, all of the frameworks mentioned in the key terms section are ideal for application. Of course further research is required before registering them in your essay, but from the above descriptions, you can examine which one is suitable from brainstorming. Below is a proposed approach to picking the suitable methodologies:

- *To explore the roles and powers of media, intermediaries and the audience/public:* Hypodermic needle, two-step flow, framing, uses and gratifications theories.
- *To examine how audiences of mass media consume its content:* encoding-decoding, cultivation, spiral of silence, cognitive dissonance theories.
- *To dissect components of a media artifact, their meanings and values:* semiotic theory, encoding-decoding, all communication models, all paradigms.

You should have a vision, obvious or vague, of the theories you're going to apply when you finish selecting your unit of analysis. It is recommended to choose one from each section; for example, if you're going to apply 2 frameworks, then model + paradigm, model + theory or paradigm + theory is the ideal style. This gives your analysis variety and showcases your understanding of both the frameworks and your own subject.

Remember that each framework must be utilized with the purpose of answering the research questions in mind.

3. INTRODUCTION:

Here is a sample structure for your opening segment:

- Background information on the field your artifact belongs to: 2 sentences (e.g. Vietnamese contemporary film industry)

Example: In every way, Vietnam has proven its film production prowess in recent years by making headlines both locally and internationally. The first half of this year witnessed an encouraging comeback from the pre-Covid era, with 23 million admissions recorded in the box office (Wong 2023). Accompanied by an astounding figure of over \$90 million in total revenue in the opening seven months, Vietnam's film industry is well and truly on its way back. The credits of this miniature rebirth can be attributed to the Oscar-shortlisted "Children of The Mist", the Camera d'Or winner at Cannes Film Festival "Inside the Yellow Cocoon Shell", the national box office hit "The House of No Man", and more.

- Basic details regarding your artifact (make the reader understand what your unit of analysis is about): 2-3 sentences (e.g. "Face Off 6" facts and relevant info)

Example: "Face Off 6: The Ticket of Destiny" deserves a spot in that illustrious light as well. The sixth and latest installment in an anthology movie series garnered a revenue of approximately \$11 million, in turn making it the fourth-highest grossing film up until this point (Wong 2023). Deemed an ideal starting point for getting into the Vietnamese film-making

atmosphere, the blockbuster film directed by the duo of Ly Hai and Minh Ha “follows the theme of over-the-top scenarios revealed through an escalating series of events” (Cohen 2023).

- Insert your research questions and thesis statement (type of single case study, your intended goals for this research, and the frameworks you’re going to use): 3-4 sentences.

Example: This movie’s semiotics, meaning and overall theme proves an ideal artifact for a critical case study. In what ways do the movie’s semiotic components contribute toward its main message? More particularly, how has “Face Off 6” portrayed Vietnam’s societal problems and promoted civil values simultaneously? This single case study will attempt to provide answers for these research questions, using the semiotic theory and the narrative paradigm as lenses.

4. SIGNIFICANCE:

Here is a suggested structure for your importance section:

- Further background information/meaning definition on artifact’s field: 1-2 sentences (e.g. the genre the film is in and what that genre often offers).
- Provide evidence as to why you have selected such artifact as your unit of analysis: 3-5 sentences
 - Research rationale: why did your research lead you to your artifact?
 - Uniqueness: why did you choose this artifact over others (stating its distinctiveness)? For example, the movie may have set a box office record, won multiple awards or discussed a previously obscure topic.
 - Engagement: what are the general key values or properties that this piece of media offers to its audience? (e.g. sound/visual effects, simplicity, purpose, technological application, etc.)
- Establish a connection between your case study and the Prof Comm discipline OR any of the 7 Media and Communications models (introduced in course content): 1-2 sentences.

Example: It is noteworthy that in relation to Griffin’s (2012) seven research traditions in the media and communication field, this case study closely follows the model of semiotic since via signs, the film’s process of sharing meaning is scrutinized.

5. THEORY:

Here is a guide for your framework execution:

- Explanation/Definition/Description of your paradigm/model/theory, their purpose and its elements: 3-4 sentences. Integrate your academic sources in this part.
- Discuss the framework’s relevance and weight to your research purpose: 3-4 sentences.
 - Usefulness: how does this paradigm/model/theory help you toward dissecting the unit of analysis? What area does it aid your research (e.g. semiotics/audience engagement/mass media communication/etc.)?
 - Justification: why have chosen to go forward with this approach? You should not compare one framework with another, just attempt to explain what it brings to the table and how it makes your job easier.

- Avoid describing the concept once more (repetition).
- Link your framework back to the discipline of Media and Communications: 1-2 sentences:
 - What aspect of media and comms will you have a better grasp on?
 - What implications will your research mean to other models within the discipline?

Repeat the process if you want to apply another paradigm/model/theory. If you plan to only apply one framework, it is suggested that it be a theory, a communication or the narrative paradigm. This selection will allow you more areas and nuances to investigate on the matter.

Example:

Semiotics is by no means a harmonious field of knowledge. It is composed of various sets of academic beliefs, allowing an individual to perceive signs, signals and other meaningful substances in different fashion. As Berger (2011) claimed, it is a framework aimed at examining the significance within cultural texts by treating them as though they were a linguistic form. To dissect “Face Off 6”’s myriad of signaling elements, Peirce’s theory of signs will be used as a lens rather than its peers since it provides a deeper, more encompassing approach in rationalizing movie elements.

The scholar Charles Sanders Peirce stated via his perspective on semiotic study that [insert your explanation]. The theory serves to [insert the purpose of the theory]. It consists of [insert the components of the theory]. These notions will prove to be of great use when applied to this case study because [insert your reasoning its usefulness]. In a detailed comparison with de Saussure’s model, this theory outshines the other in this case study since [insert your comparison]. Ideally, by selecting Peirce’s theory of signs for the artistic artifact “Face Off 6”, the semiotic branch of media and communication traditions is channeled, which will produce a real life example of theory application.

6. ANALYSIS:

For this part of the research, split your paper according to the framework you proposed earlier. For instance, you introduced semiotic theory and Osgood-Schram’s model as your frameworks, then analyze the artifact separately - the first analysis goes with the semiotic theory, the second Osgood-Schram’s model.

“You need to apply the theories/paradigms/models or concepts you identified earlier in a meaningful way to your work. This means you need to be accurate and purposefully in your analysis and avoid being overly descriptive. You need to engage in a detailed examination of the elements or structure of your chosen text in relation to Media and Communications-based concerns.”

Almost all theories possess a variety of proponents for you to examine. Your task is to analyze their properties, values, roles, and so on - something that is not obvious, otherwise you risk being descriptive. To illustrate, Lasswell’s model are consisted of the sender, message, medium, receiver, and feedback:

- *Sender:*
 - Identify the sender in the context of your artifact (e.g. the film production company, actors, actresses, etc.).
 - Examine their roles, purposes, and more. These settings depend on your artifact.
- *Message:*
 - Visibility: Is the message easy to deduce? What age group does the audience need to belong to to understand it?
 - Manifestation: Through which means does the message manifest itself? Are there more than one message?
 - Property: Is this message unique, only brought up through this film and not anything else? Does the message cause a societal debate? Do/Can people misinterpret this message or confuse it with another?
- *Medium:*
 - Type: What platform does the artifact present itself?
 - Purpose: What purpose does presenting the artifact on that platform serve? Social media = fan engagement, newspaper articles = media coverage, etc. Do audiences have to pay money to see this?
- *Receiver:*
 - Specification: What is the target audience? How does the marketing effort from the film production company reflect this? What gender/age group/ethnicity/region do they belong to?
 - Other: How does the artifact benefit the receivers? Is the message suitable for them?
- *Feedback:*
 - This is usually on media that promotes two-way communication (e.g. social media, fan meetings, press conferences, etc.)
 - Process: How is the feedback session conducted? How is feedback assessed and given an impression? Who is in charge of this process?
 - Nature: Is the feedback uniform or divided? What is the cause?

Pay attention to every single component included in the framework's concept and analyze in great detail. The deeper you can delve into them to string aspects together, revealing a larger picture, the higher your research quality gets.

7. CONCLUSION:

Here is a model conclusion that you can follow:

- Restate your overarching argument: 1-2 sentences (e.g. what the movie stands for, its importance as an media and communication artifact).

Example: To summarize, "Face Off 6" delivers on its filmic purpose through [insert movie's message, theme, etc.]. Its distinctive take on displaying various aspects of Vietnamese culture still finds its way to be coherent with the theme set out by previous installments within the series, again justifying its place as both a box office hit and a meaningful communication medium.

- Provide the summary of your entire analysis: 2-3 sentences
 - The major discoveries you've made => new knowledge gained compared to what you know before conducting the research.

- With the help of theory/model/paradigm, what more did you know about the artifact and its relevant details)

Example: Through Peirce's theory of signs, the film's key concepts are scrutinized to reveal [insert your finding]. In addition, the use of Lasswell's model gives another viewpoint on the artifact: [insert your finding]. These discoveries help to unravel the overarching message from a closer inspection of each individual element within the film.

- State your answer to the research questions: 1-2 sentences.

Example: It is from this case study that the research questions posed at the beginning can be answered. Firstly, [insert your answer]. For the second research query, [insert your answer].

- Discuss key insights and offer implications: 2 sentences.
 - What does this mean for the field/industry as a whole? The fact that this artifact is considered below par/mediocre/decent/groundbreaking means what?
 - Will future media products follow this footpath or will it divert?
 - What effects does this media/type of media have on displaying contemporary Vietnamese culture?

Example: Future blockbusters or alternative genres of movies can distill precious film-making experience from the success of "Face Off 6" as a semiotic work of art. From [insert movie element] to [insert movie element], Vietnam's film industry as a whole benefits from the application of these contributors and has potential to deliver even more for future audiences. The movie also serves as an ideal example that exemplifies Vietnam's contemporary scene, with many values displayed throughout - both the good and the imperfect.