

Syllabus

JOMC 146 -- International Communication

Fall 2002

12-1:15 MW, Carroll 33

Administrative Details

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Office hours: 10-12 MW and by appointment.

I am also available when I am in my office, which is most of the normal times. I recommend an email or phone call before you hike up to the top of Carroll Hall to make sure that I am around.

Overview

This class is an introduction to and survey of the broad area of international communication. Discussion topics include the rising influence of culture in the post-cold-war world; language and especially English as the world language; Anglo-American dominance of all aspects of global communication; the influence of technology in the globalization of communication; communication in national development or social change; and the emergence of a global style of journalism.

The class traditionally has been cross-listed in political science and communication studies (although it apparently is not this semester). It counts as a social science elective perspective in the College of Arts and Sciences and as a 100-level elective in the School of Journalism and mass Communication.

The Blackboard software is relatively new and changes, and I am still learning how it can be usefully incorporated into a class of this size and content. Take some time to explore the system if you have not used it in a class before. The instructor's version is slightly different from yours, so some of the details you use may be different. We will use it primarily in the following areas:

Announcements. The opening page is a bulletin board where I will post current information or changes to the syllabus. I recommend you check it at least once a week.

Course Documents. This page leads you to several folders, all of which are reasonably self-explanatory. The outside readings are posted here along with various documents that in earlier classes would have been handouts or feedback. PowerPoint slide presentations from class discussions are also here; they will be posted right after each class.

Assessment. This area contains both the online quizzes and your grades. When a quiz is available, you click on a notice on the opening Announcements page and go right to it. You can check your grades at any time. You, of course, see only your grades, and no one else enrolled in the class can access them. After each graded assignment, I'll add an announcement with information about the range of grades.

Discussion Board. This is an area for asynchronous communication. That means that you can read messages and add your own whenever you want to. Others respond in the same way. In the past, it has worked well for further discussions of topics raised in class. We will also use it to get acquainted with

others in the class and to exchange useful bits of information.

Communication. An email system is included that allows me to send a message to the entire class or to individual students or groups of students. The email address is your UNC Onyen (email ID and password). I don't know if you can change it or change the way you are listed in the class, but if you want to, we can give it a shot.

Student Tools. Here you can create a version of your own web page and submit papers to the instructor. I don't recommend the latter, however, because then I have to print it. Last year I used almost two reams of paper and a cartridge of toner on one assignment.

Reading

Note that the edition we will use was published this summer and will be available shortly – if not already – in Student Stores. Make sure you get the SIXTH edition (copyright 2002). The cover is a non-descript gray.

Only one textbook is required: William A. Hachten and James F. Scotton, *The World News Prism: Global Media in an Era of Terrorism*, 6th Ed. (2002). One or two copies are available in the Park Library. In addition, a fair number of readings are listed in the syllabus. All of these are available on the Blackboard web site. They and other class-related materials are stored in a variety of common formats -- Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat, and HTML web pages. Most PCs have software to read these formats and open them automatically when you double-click on them. You can read the materials on line, copy them to your own PC, or print a copy.

Procedures

I take attendance at every class meeting and expect you to be there. You can have three absences during the semester without influence on your grade. After that, a penalty will be assessed. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.

The online quizzes are available from 8 a.m. on the first day to 5 p.m. on the second day. If you have trouble accessing the quiz or get disconnected before completing it, let me know right away. Use email or leave a phone message. I can reset the system so that you can access it a second time. If I don't hear from you, you get the grade you have on the system at that time. I was surprised last semester that a number of students failed to take the quiz when it was available but did not contact me or later offered poor excuses for missing it. There are no excuses after the fact. I will send you a reminder email before the quiz, but then it's up to you to organize your schedule to include the quiz and to remind yourself of it. Tip: don't wait until 4 p.m. of the second day. The same rule applies for other requirements. If you have trouble meeting the deadlines, let me know in advance. I will try to accommodate you; after the deadline, there are no second tries.

We will include discussion in class meetings and use the discussion boards to continue discussions of major topics. Questions and comments are always welcome in class, and I look forward to continuing discussions after class.

Grades

The final grade will be based on the formula below. In general, the usual distribution applies: 90-100 is an A; 80-89 is a B; etc. The actual points vary from assignment to assignment, but they are weighted in the cumulative point total in the grade book. Because a variety of graded assignments are included, the tendency is for grades to cluster together at the end of the semester. As a result, only a few points in the final distribution separate a large number of students. Moral: take each of the assignments seriously. Hitting a single every time you come to bat is a better way to end up with the batting average you want than to wait and hope for a home run in the bottom of the ninth.

The final point distribution is subject to minor adjustment. You can lose a few points for excessive absences (see above), and you can pick up a couple of points by active participation in the class and on-line discussions. Because a few points make the difference between letter grades, it's important to take advantage of every opportunity to pick up points.

Quizzes: 20%. These are short (ten-item) multiple choice quizzes based on the readings and class discussions. You see your score immediately after you submit the quiz and get some limited feedback.

Book report: 20%. This is a three- to four-page report on a book about a country of interest to you. It may be one you are already familiar with or one you know nothing about but would like to explore. A list of books to choose from is posted on the Course Documents page. Most of them are readable studies by journalists who have served in the country or region, and almost all of them were published within the past ten years. General comments on the reports that I distributed last year are available as a guide to writing the report; and copies of some of the best ones are available in the Park Library.

Essay: 20%. This is not a term paper but your interpretation of a set of materials on al-Jazeera, a controversial TV station operating in Qatar. You will notice a folder in the Course Documents section that contains the material for the essay. The materials are a mixture of journalistic reports and one or two academic studies. In addition to this, we will see in class a video made by Prof. Kindham of Comm Studies after a delegation from UNC visited Qatar last year. This was in connection with a proposal to establish a branch of the university there. The decision was not to do it, but that part of the world remains of particular interest. If you want, you can track down other materials on al-Jazeera, but it's not necessary. Everything you need is on the website, in the video, or in class discussions that will follow.

Midterm exam: 20%. A short-answer, identification in-class exam with some choice.

Final exam: 20%. Similar to the midterm.

Honor Code

The honor code at UNC is strict and rigorously enforced. A relatively new but fast-growing concern is plagiarism – either submitting material found (usually) on the Internet as your own or cutting and pasting a paper from online sources. It is one (very bad) thing to pass off a paper you find on the web as your own; it is almost as bad to take ideas or large chunks of someone else's work without attributing them properly.

The assignments in this class have been selected, in part, to make this kind of Honor Code violation difficult. But it is not impossible, of course. The software to detect plagiarism always lags the resources to do it, but it is improving. The risks of getting caught are high enough and the penalties severe enough that the benefits never outweigh the damage. If you are challenged, the first question is whether you can establish a paper or electronic trail of your work. If you can't, you're in serious trouble.

If you have questions about what is permissible, see me.

Calendar

The end of the semester always involves too many exams and papers, so I have tried to front-load the semester. Note that the book report is due at the end of the third week and that the essay is due about mid-semester. This is not designed to let you slide through the last half of the semester, but to spread the workload out more evenly than it is in most classes.

Because of the presence of occasional visitors and unpredictable events, there may be some last-minute change of topics and administrative matters, but dates of the graded assignments are not likely to be changed short of a major disaster, and we cannot change the schedule of the final exam.

You can check the due dates of the various requirements on the Blackboard website.

Week 1.

Wed., Aug. 21. Getting started. The big picture. Read Stevenson, Global Communication in the 21st Century.

Week 2.

Mon., Aug. 26. Making sense of the world: globalization and conflict. Read Fukuyama, The End of History; Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations; and Kurtz, The Future of History.

Wed., Aug. 28. Culture and conflict. Read Kaplan, the Coming Anarchy; Lewis, What Went Wrong?; Iyer, The Global Soul.

Week 3.

Mon., Sep. 2. No class – Labor Day holiday.

Wed., Sep. 4. Language. Read Swerdlow, The Power of Writing; Buruma, The Road to Babel.

Thu., Sep. 5. Quiz 1 goes online at 8 a.m.

Fri., Sep. 6. Quiz 1 goes offline at 5 p.m.

Week 4.

Mon., Sep. 9. Video: The Search for the First Language.

Wed., Sep. 11. English: the global language. Read the Economist, Empire of English; Anthony, Fears of Cultural Imperialism Spread Along with English.

Fri., Sep. 13. Book report due by 5 p.m. Leave it in my mailbox, slip it under the door, or email it to me.

Week 5.

Mon., Sep. 16. Cultural dominance. Buicks and Starbucks in China; Starbucks in Europe? Hooray for Globowood.

Wed., Sep. 18. Looking at US. Conversations with JOMC international students on culture, language, U.S. influence, and anything else that comes to mind.

Week 6.

Mon., Sep. 23. The last word on communication, language, and culture.

Wed., Sep. 25. The global news system. Read Hachten, Ch. 1, News Communication for a New Global System.

Thur., Sep. 26. Quiz 2 goes on line at 8 a.m.

Fri., Sep. 27. Quiz 2 goes off line at 5 p.m.

Week 7.

Mon., Sep. 30. Video: Our Man in Cairo.

Wed., Oct. 2. The global players in news. Read Hachten, Ch. 3, International News System.

Week 8.

Mon., Oct. 7. Video: Who's Afraid of Rupert Murdoch?

Wed., Oct. 9. Midterm exam in class.

Week 9.

Mon., Oct. 14. Theories of the news. Read Hachten, Ch. 11, Changing Ideologies of Press Control.

Wed., Oct. 16. The Western concept. Read Troubles at Le Monde.

Week 10.

Mon., Oct. 21. The English-speaking world. Read Newly Popular BBC; Who Needs the BBC?

Wed., Oct. 23. The communist concept.

Thu., Oct. 24. Quiz 3 goes online at 8 a.m.

Fri., Oct. 25. Quiz 3 goes offline at 5 p.m.

Week 11.

Mon., Oct. 28. The authoritarian concept. Video: Al-Jazeera; the UNC Tour. Read materials in al-Jazeera folder.

Mon., Oct. 30. The revolutionary concept. Read the materials in the folder about Iranian media.

Week 12.

Mon., Nov. 4. The development concept. Read Radio the Missing Link in Development.

Wed., Nov. 6. Rethinking globalization. Hachten, Ch. 5, The Impact of Great News Events, and Ch. 6, Globalization of Media.

Fri., Nov. 8. Essay on al-Jazeera due by 5 p.m. Leave it in my mailbox, slip it under the door, or email it.

Week 13.

Mon., Nov. 11. Media and war. Video: Dying to Tell the Story. Read Hachten, Ch. 2, War on Terrorism Challenges News Media, and Ch. 10, Covering the World's Hot Spots, and materials about the media in the war/genocide in Rwanda.

Wed., Nov. 13. Communication and world orders.

Week 14.

Mon., Nov. 18. Global news flow revisited. Read Stevenson, Mapping the News of the World; The Future of Foreign News; Hachten, Ch. 9, New Ways to Report the World – or Not.

Wed., Nov. 20. Media and social change. Read Stevenson, Communication and National Development, and Hachten, Ch. 7, New Media and the Developing World

Thu., Nov. 21. Quiz 4 goes online at 8 a.m.

Fri., Nov. 22. Quiz 4 goes offline at 5 p.m.

Week 15.

Mon., Nov. 25. Public diplomacy. Read Hachten, Ch. 8, Public Diplomacy and Political Warfare.

Wed., Nov. 27. Thanksgiving break begins at 1 p.m., so we'll cancel class.

Week 16.

Mon., Dec. 2. Technology. Video: Wiring the World. Read Control of the Internet in China and Cuba; Internet Blocking in the Arab World; Hachten, Ch. 4, Comsats, Internet, and New Media.

Wed., Dec. 4. Preparing for the future. Read Stevenson, a Few Words in Praise of Globalization; Hachten Ch. 12, Western Media to World Media.

Thu., Dec. 5. Quiz 5 goes online at 8 a.m.

Fri., Dec. 6. Quiz 5 goes offline at 5 p.m.

Final exam: Monday, Dec. 9, 12 noon.