

SOCIOLOGY 2L03
MEDIA INSTITUTIONS

Fall, 2015
Thursday, Friday 2:30-3:20
Class Location: MDCL-1110

Instructor: P. G. Watson
Office: KTH-643 Ext.: T27346
Office Hours: Thurs. 12:30-1:30 pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on sociological approaches to understanding interaction with media outlets in a theoretically informed manner. The intention of the course is to create a space whereby we may critically examine various media outlets and products *as a production* and consider the social aspects and impacts of media ownership, technological change, economics, politics, body representation, privacy, new media, etc. We will discuss a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches for sociological inquiry of media. Following the course, students will be equipped to understand media products as social facts,

OUTLINE

The course outline found below gives you approximate dates for when topics will be covered. In the event of major changes to the schedule, you will be given notice both in class and on Avenue to Learn.

Part I: Introduction

Mass Media and the Social World (Sept. 10-11)
Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 1

Part II: Political Economy

Mass Media and the Economy (Sept. 17-18)
Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 2

Mass Media and Politics (Sept. 24-25)
Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 3

Work within Mass Media (Oct. 1-2, 8)
Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 4

Mid-Term Test on Part I and Part II (Oct. 9)

Reading Week – October 12-16th – No Lectures

Part III: Cultural Studies

Mass Media and Ideology (Oct. 22-29)
Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 5

Representation and Inequality in Mass Media (Oct. 30-Nov. 6)

Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 6

Mass Media and Audiences (Nov. 12-20)

Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 8

New Media (Nov. 26-27)

Required Reading: Croteau et al., Chapter 9 & 10

End of Term Review (Dec. 3-4)

Final Examination on Entire Course (Dec. 6 to Dec. 20)

In addition to these readings, through the terms I will add additional scholarly journal articles to A2L. These articles will be used to add depth to lectures, and students may find them useful when writing their assignment. In each lecture, I will conclude with a series of potential exam questions. Article material that is covered in these potential exam questions may be included in the mid-term and final exam.

TEXTS

Croteau, D., Hoynes, W., & Milan, S. (2012). *Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Articles on A2L as assigned.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

- Mid-Term Test 30% Scheduled for Oct. 9
- Assignment 35% Due on Nov. 20
- Final Examination 35% Scheduled by the Registrar (Dec. 6 to Dec. 20)

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration or group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

In this course we reserve the right to use a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically via Avenue-2-Learn and it may be checked for academic dishonesty either manually by the instructor/TA, or via software.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see <http://c1l.mcmaster.ca/COU/degree/undergraduate.html>). First, sociological approaches to the study of media industries are complex and varied. This course will present **Depth and Breadth of Knowledge** for these sociological approaches to media analysis. Secondly, when attempting to make a statement about interactions with media products, it is important to understand the complexity and sophistication of our own language. We will focus on **Communication Skills**, in accurately and reliably writing about sociological analyses of media interactions. Finally, Sociology presents a number of *lenses* or *viewpoints* from which we might understand media interactions. This course will forward an **Awareness of the Limits of Knowledge** including how limits of knowing about media, intentionality, motivation and interpretation of audience response.

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Written assignments will be submitted via Avenue to Learn (A2L). Specific instructions on how to format and submit the written assignment will be circulated with assignment instructions in approximately week three of the course.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 days and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulation have changed beginning Fall 2015.

If you have any questions about MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.
