

SPC 422 Media Criticism

Credit Hours: 3

In-Class Instructional Hours: 3

Labs: 0

Field Work: 0

Catalog Description:

Prerequisite. Junior or Senior Standing

Critical analysis of mass media, including print, broadcast and digital; application to news, documentaries, entertainment programming and advertising; focus on social, cultural and political impact of media messages from a rhetorical perspective.

Reasons for Revision:

(Fall 2005) This course (formerly JBS 422 Mass Media Criticism) was last revised in 1989 as part of a departmental program restructuring. This new proposal is part of a general program review, through which Communication seeks to update its courses in light of departmental experience with the previous program version, evolving departmental needs, and expanding scholarship in the field. Additionally, the department is undertaking this revision to position itself for accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Note: As part of this overall revision, speech and criticism courses are being re-labeled as SPC rather than COM to distinguish between the humanistic base of the new SPC courses and the applied nature of the courses that will retain the COM prefix.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:	Course Content References:	Assessment:
1. Articulate the critical perspective and persuasive impact of mass-mediated messages	I, II, V, VI	1. Exams, research/writing projects, oral presentations
2. Demonstrate familiarity with contemporary literature in mass media criticism	I, II, III	2. Exams, research/writing projects, oral presentations
3. Explain key theoretical and critical approaches to mass media messages	I, II	3. Exams, research/writing projects, oral presentations
4. Demonstrate a critical perspective and analytical approach in evaluating mass media artifacts and messages	I, II, III, IV	4. Exams, research/writing projects, oral presentations
5. Apply both objective and subjective statements of criticism	I, II, V, VI, VII	5. Exams, research/writing projects, oral presentations

Course Content:

- I. Theoretical premises
 - A. Role of media in democratic society
 - B. Characteristics of media criticism
 - C. Contemporary theories and principles of media criticism
 - D. Approaches to media criticism
 - 1. Audience-oriented analysis
 - 2. Production-based analysis
 - 3. Text-oriented analysis
 - 4. Ideological analysis
- II. Rhetorical perspective
 - A. Traditional approach
 - B. Contemporary approaches
- III. Media criticism
 - A. Critical-analytical framework of media criticism
 - B. Qualitative methods of research and analysis
 - C. Quantitative methods of research and analysis
- IV. Artifacts in media criticism
 - A. News reporting
 - B. Political advertising
 - C. Film
 - D. Music programming
 - E. Television comedy and drama
 - F. Political and editorial cartoons
- V. Criticism in mainstream media
 - A. Newspapers
 - B. Television
 - C. Radio
 - D. Movies
 - E. Music
- VI. Criticism in alternative media
 - A. Non-mainstream online media
 - B. Independent film
 - C. Advocacy websites
 - D. Documentaries
- VII. Applications of media criticism
 - A. Current events
 - B. Politics
 - C. Sports
 - D. Entertainment
 - E. Religion and culture

Resources:

Current Scholarship in the Field

- Alterman, E. (2004). *What liberal media? The truth about bias and the news*. New York: Basic [Reprint].
- Andrejevic, M. (2003). *Reality TV: The work of being watched*. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Asa, A., & Berger, E. (2004). *Media analysis techniques* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.
- Berger, A. (2003). *Media and society: A critical perspective*. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bignell, J. (2002). *Media semiotics: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Manchester UK: Manchester University Press.
- Campbell, R., Martin, C., & Fabos, B. (2005). *Media and culture: An introduction to mass communication* (4th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Curran, J., & Park, M-J. (eds.). (2000). *De-Westernizing media studies*. London: Routledge.
- Gauntlett, D. (2002). *Media, gender and identity: An introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Hess, S., & Kalb, M.L. (2004). *Media and the war on terrorism*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution.
- Lehman, P., & Luhr, W. (2003). *Thinking about movies: Watching, questioning, enjoying* (2nd ed.). Malden MA.: Blackwell.
- McChesney, R. (2004). *The problem of the media: U.S. communication politics in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Monthly Review.
- McChesney, R., & Scott, B. (2004). *Our unfree press: 100 years of radical media criticism*. New York: New Press.
- Orlik, P.B. (2000). *Electronic media criticism: Applied perspectives* (2nd ed.). Mahway NH: Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates.
- Palmer, N. (ed.). (2004). *Terrorism, war and the press*. Cambridge MA: Harvard/Joan Shorenstein Center.
- Silverblatt, A. (2001). *Media literacy: Keys to interpreting media messages* (2nd ed.). New York: Praeger.
- Starr, P. (2004). *The creation of the media*. New York: Basic.

Periodicals

Communication Quarterly
Critical Studies in Mass Communication
Journal of Applied Communication Research
Journalism of Broadcasting and Electronic Media
Journal of Communication