Course Syllabus

CODE number: CMM 203 G

Number of ECTS 6

Contact Details for Professor Georgios Terzis

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Tel: 02-614 81 85

Course Time: Wednesday 10h00-11h30 & Friday 11h30-13h00

Office Hours: Friday 13h00-14h30

Course Prerequisites (if any): None

Course Description
The course aims to give students a clear understanding of the news media function in society and to increase students’ awareness of the ethics and social role of journalism. It discusses issues of news values and selectivity, news gatekeeping and framing, and news agenda setting. It examines the changes in the media field as the world continues to become a digitally driven one.

Learning Objectives

Major Learning Objectives:

1. To acquire knowledge of Communication Studies as a science and understand and compare the academic literature of different fields of Communication studies.
2. To promote the understanding and critical reflection of occupational, regulatory, ethical, technological, political, economic, and cultural factors in communication and different media industries, and be able to assess their impact.
3. To know and be able to apply some of the main social science research methods in the design and execution of communication projects, independently or in a team.
4. To understand the ethical aspects of the work and the social responsibilities of professional communicators in different contexts such as journalism and new media.
5. To understand the international aspects of the communication industry.

These learning outcomes are in line with the following Discipline Learning Outcomes for the Bachelor in Communications Sciences as ratified by the NVAO: DLO 1, DLO 2, DLO 3, DLO 5, DLO 7, DLO 8, and DLO 11.

Course Learning Objectives

Acquired Knowledge:
- An understanding of the news media function in society and to increase students’ awareness of the social role of journalism.
- An understanding of issues of news values and selectivity, news gatekeeping and framing, and news agenda setting.
- Ethical principles of applying conceptual tools in researching real-life concepts.

Applying Knowledge:
- Information from research sources, along with the accurate documentation of those sources;
- Apply advanced Internet research skills aimed at a critical evaluation of websites and filtering of information (e.g., greater attention to site sponsorship; advanced search engine skills; use of reliable gateway sites);
- Increasing ability to conceive and write original research papers.
- Compose a research essay integrating information drawn from various sources into a cohesive exposition;
- Participate in academic debates;
- Draft a 3500 word term paper based on a balanced selection or well-chosen primary and/or secondary sources;
- Ability to employ rhetorical strategies effectively in written and oral assignments;

Attitude:
- Develop strong networking and time management skills.
- Have trust in one’s own competence and performance, but know one’s own limitations;
- Be open but critical towards one’s own domain specific background.
COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK 1  Introduction to the course/ Syllabus Review

Core Reading: Glance through class textbook and other reading material and discuss research paper topics for your paper. Read Chapter 1 from the textbook: Introduction

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: Why and how we should do Journalism Studies? Describe the turn from the empirical to the sociological to the global comparative turn of journalism studies.

WEEK 2  History of journalism

Core Reading: Chapter 2 – Journalism History

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: What is the impact of professionalization of journalism? What are the different alternatives models of journalism based on Halin and Manchini’s analysis on Comparative Media Systems? Which are the different scholarly approaches?
WEEK 3  News values and selection

Core Reading: Chapter 12 – News Values and Selectivity,

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: Which are the intrinsic and non-intrinsic values for news selection?

WEEK 4  Ethics [GUEST LECTURE & OUT CLASS EXERCISE]

Core Reading: from Reader Chapter 21 – Journalism Ethics

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions:
Which are the main philosophical approaches to media ethics? Which are the main critiques? How can we globalize media ethics?

WEEK 5  Journalism Gatekeepers  [GUEST LECTURE & OUT CLASS EXERCISE]

Core Reading: chapter 6 Journalists as Gatekeepers

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: Who are the media gatekeepers and how do they operate? Which are the main critical and methodological issues in gatekeeping research?

**WEEK 6** News framing / Mid Term Exam Review

Core Reading: Chapter 13 – Nature, Sources, and Effects of News Framing

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):
Levin, I., Schneider, S., & Gaeth, G. (1998). All frames are not created equal: A typology and critical analysis of framing effects. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 76, 149–188.

Reading Questions: What is a frame? Which are the different types of frames in media content? Which are the types of framing effects?

**WEEK 7** Mid Term Exam Wednesday 7 October

**WEEK 8** Agenda setting

Core Reading: Chapter 11 – Agenda Setting

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):


Reading Questions/Exercise: What are the main methodological issues when we research agenda setting processes? In class, you will receive a theme. Find a case in the media (current or past) related to that theme that clearly demonstrates agenda setting. Be prepared to discuss and analyze how and why the media persuaded the public that the topic was so important.

**WEEK 9  Journalism and Democracy**

Core Reading: Chapter 17 – Journalism and Democracy

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions:
Why is journalism necessary in liberal democracies? What is the problem with hyperadversarialism? What is the impact of on line news to deliberative democracies?

**WEEK 10  Media ‘Objectivity’**

Core Reading: Chapter 7 – Objectivity, Professionalism, and Truth Seeking in Journalism

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: Does Media Objectivity exist? What is the relation of different media systems and media objectivity around the world?

**WEEK 11   Practicum**

**Students will attend presentations by a guest lecturer, a Press Conference/Briefings**

**WEEK 12   Citizen Journalism / Journalism and social media**

Core Reading: Chapter 10 – Convergence and Cross-Platform Content Production

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: What are the main newsroom changes due to convergence? What is the main impact of user generated content? What are the social and ethical implications?

**WEEK 13   There are careers in Journalism in the future - Entrepreneurial thinking**

Core Reading: Chapter 5 – News Organizations and Routines

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: What is the main concept of news routines and beats and where and when do they become evident? What is their impact on the use of media by the different stakeholders?

WEEK 14 Journalism studies in a global context / final exam review

Core Reading: Chapter 24 Journalism and Globalization

Further Reading: to be provided in advance by the professor

Suggested Readings (to be used for writing the assignments):

Reading Questions: What is the future of foreign correspondence? What is the CNN effect? What do we mean by compassion fatigue? What is the impact of the rise of the global issues and the world risk society?

WEEK 15 Final Exam

Course Materials

Textbook
THE HANDBOOK OF JOURNALISM STUDIES
Edited by Karin Wahl-Jorgensen & Thomas Hanitzsch

Additional Readings and Case Studies
Students will be provided with a number of academic papers and other reading material on a weekly basis (all available in PointCarre).

Conferences

Students will be required to attend conferences and press briefings
Videos
Students will be required to watch some videos of recorded presentations (out of class) in relation to topics covered in class

Course support site: Pointcarré
Course materials (syllabus, support materials, important messages, etc) will be uploaded on the Vesalius website, Pointcarré. Students are expected to visit the site regularly to keep abreast of course changes and evolutions.

Description of Activities and Grading Criteria

Students will be expected to be present and engaged during lessons and alert to the current news throughout the course. They will be graded on participation and on their ability to ask good questions and synthesize information quickly. Their written assignments will be judged on their ability to apply tools and structures they learned in class and through reading assignments.

The final grade will be based on the following:

- Academic Research Paper 40%
- Mid-Term Exam 30%
- Final Exam 30%

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy, in line with the Flemish Educational norms, is now as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Scale of 20</th>
<th>Scale of 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
<td>81-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
<td>69-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
<td>66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
<td>62-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>11.5-12.2</td>
<td>58-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
<td>54-57</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10.0-10.6</td>
<td>50-53</td>
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<td>F</td>
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Further description of Assessment Criteria for Written Assignments

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<th>0-61</th>
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### Additional Course Policies

#### Participation

Attendance and active participation is vital to the student’s progress. Students are expected to attend classes on time and take notes. Participation means attending class and actively contributing to class discussions. Students who are absent are responsible for finding out what was covered in class. Because the ability to meet deadlines is a crucial skill for all communications professionals, **late assignments will not be accepted!**

#### Research Paper Instructions

**All papers would need to be submitted to Turnitin!** Students should write a paper on a selected comprehensive case study (agreed with the professor) using an approved Style citation system and the theoretical frameworks discussed in class.

**The Main Elements to be included in your paper are:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>The research question and the rationale behind the selection of the case study are vague and inappropriate.</th>
<th>The research question and the rationale behind the selection of the case study are satisfactory.</th>
<th>The research question and the rationale behind the selection of the case study are clear and appropriate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case Study analysis</td>
<td>Some factual information is missing or the topic is not clearly identified.</td>
<td>Most relevant information is presented but the core analytical elements are not clearly identified.</td>
<td>Key facts are presented in an original, succinct, and analytical manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>Conclusions merely repeat information contained in theoretical framework and case study analysis.</td>
<td>Conclusions bring new information but no critical understanding of the topic analysed.</td>
<td>Conclusions reveal a personal and critical understanding of the analysed topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure, writing, bibliography and referencing</td>
<td>The argument is not developed in a coherent way. Language is poor. References are incomplete and the quoting system is not coherent. Less than 7 academic references.</td>
<td>Some important conceptual and analytical pitfalls in the development of the argument; the writing is hard to read. At least 7 academic references.</td>
<td>The argument is developed in a coherent and appropriate way; Language is overall correct; At least 10 academic references covering factual background and theories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Theoretical framework**

The second part offers a first theoretical explanation (*why?*) for the selected issue/event/decision/policy behavior. It summarizes the core assumptions of the selected theoretical approach. It offers a coherent explanation of the selected topic through the lens of this theoretical approach.

**Analysis**

This third part analyses the selected case study through your selected theoretical and methodological lens.

**Conclusions**

The last part discusses how the selected theoretical framework interact (*if it is inconsistent, compatible, etc.*) and presents the main concluding remarks.

**Bibliography**

7-10 peer reviewed academic references

**Length**

3500 words

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**Academic Assignments are due on:**

**Tuesday 10 November (at reception)**

**Mid Term and Final Exam**

The mid term and final exams will cover both lecture notes and assigned core and further (but NOT the assigned) readings.

The structure of the exams will be the following:

- No multiple-choice questions;
- Two long open questions (e.g. half a page);
- A long question on comparing/contrasting approaches (e.g. one page);
- A longer essay (e.g. two pages).

**Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is NOT tolerated in this course.

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.