Course Syllabus
CODE number: CMM 331 G

International Journalism

Number of ECTS 6

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Course Prerequisites (if any):
HUM112E/201P

Course Description
For more than 150 years, world news leadership has been exercised by Europe and the United States, but Europe has been the world news leader at least since 1990. This course aims to focus on foreign correspondents and the direction, flow and pattern of their coverage, as well as the impact of new technologies on the quantity, frequency and speed of their coverage.

Throughout the course, analysis of the political, economic and social importance of foreign reporting in different countries is given with special emphasis in Europe. The analysis starts with the current make-up of the foreign press corps: their numbers, backgrounds, the pressures they are under and their national obsessions. It analyses different factors affecting their coverage, resources devoted to foreign bureaus, the tensions between parachuted correspondents and old-timers, and public versus commercial media. This is followed by a detailed breakdown of the key international media players and media sectors.

Analysis continues by looking at the different news sources of foreign correspondents, and where they overlap, complement and contradict each other. The different national institutions and embassies as well as other smaller ‘official sources’ are analysed together with a number of unofficial ones, such as think tanks, NGOs and lobbies.

Throughout the course, the main challenges of communicating from a European country or the EU headquarters in Brussels are candidly discussed through interviews with foreign correspondents based in Brussels as well as
officials from the EU and Nato. Which are the dominant news frames and why is ‘Europe’ such a hard sell?

The course finally focuses on the current trends of foreign correspondence. Do more and more sophisticated communication tools help to get better international news coverage? Or does the audiences’ increasing apathy and the downsizing of the foreign bureaus offset these advances? And how do the seemingly unstoppable media trends of convergence, commercialisation, concentration and globalisation affect the way international news is reported?

**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 (human, mass, organisational, intercultural, political and business communication, journalism studies, strategic communication, and media production, research and development).
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 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 interpersonal, small group and organisational communication, journalism, new media, public relations and marketing, in a comparative intercultural perspective.
5. To be prepared to pursue a Master’s degree in all the different fields of Communication Studies (get stimulated to lifelong learning) and/or attain a high-level occupation in a relevant field.

**COURSE CALENDAR**

Lecture 1. Introduction & WHY: Why Foreign Correspondence and reporting International News matters

Lecture 2. WHO: who are the Foreign Correspondents and who do they work for

Lecture 3. WHAT: what makes it into the Foreign Correspondents' reporting agenda - News Values/Selection
Lecture 4. WHEN: when is something becoming international news
Routines and other factors affecting international news coverage

Lecture 5. WHERE: Where do international stories come from?
Sources & Gatekeeping

Lecture 6. HOW: how is international news formulated - Framing

Lecture 7. WHICH: Which are the most influential Foreign Correspondents.
Intermedia agenda setting & Mid-Term Exam

Lecture 8. Recent trends and impact of new media, commercialization, and
concentration on international news coverage

Lecture 9 Introduction to EU Institutions’ Media Sources Reporting
Europe: Trends and Developments & The Current Big Issues in Brussels [Quest Lecture: Foreign Correspondent based in Brussels]

Lecture 10 Attend the European Commission Mid-Day Press Briefing and
tour at the Europe by Satellite, EC Media Facilities, Berlaymond
Building, Schuman
Communicating Europe & Europe in the Media [Quest Lecture: EU official]

Lecture 11 News Coverage of the European Parliament campaigns &
Visit: The European Parliament and its press service

Lecture 12 Covering NATO: Visit its Press Service &
The Role of the Lobbies and their Relationship with the Media in Brussels [Quest Lecture: Lobbyist Based in Brussels]

Lecture 13 Panel with Civil Society and Think Tank Representatives
involved in international news production

Lecture 14 The Development of Pan-European Media Outlets [Quest
Lecture: Euronews director]

Lecture 15 Course Wrap: Summary and Conclusions and Final Exam

Course Materials

Textbook
A Reader provided by the instructor

Additional Readings
AIM (2006-2007) Adequate Information Management in Europe Studies, Sixth


This EU reading list produced by the Economist correspondent to Brussels contains some good reading tips and sources of news about the EU and Europe:

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.

Course Assessment
The final grade will be based on the following:
- In-Class Participation 10%
- Research Paper 30%
- Presentation and Defense of RP 10%
- Mid-Term Exam 25%
- Final Exam 25%

The time allocation is estimated as follows:
- Research Paper 35 hours
- Presentation of RP 8 hours
- Mid-Term Exam 40 hours
- Final Exam 40 hours
- In-Class Participation 42 hours

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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10.0-10.6</td>
<td>50-53</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-9.9</td>
<td>0-49</td>
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**Assessment Criteria**

A grade of A: Demonstrates outstanding competence. The work reflects a breadth of reading and is based on ample use of sources and displays vigorous analytical capacities; the central idea or ideas are original and distinctive, substantially developed and supported with details and illustrations. The paper is logically organized and displays careful language use: complete, clear and engaging sentences, correct and distinctive diction. There are NO errors in Standard English usage.

A grade of B: Demonstrates good competence. The central idea or ideas are original and clear; the writer shows that there is a point to be made. The central idea or ideas are developed and supported with argumentation. The work demonstrates that the student has covered the basic reading and displays good comprehension. The selection and use of sources is adequate. The research outcomes and arguments are presented in proper academic form.

A grade of C: The work displays a working ability to assemble bibliography and to use resources adequately; reasonable understanding of the core literature and an ability to attempt a scholarly interpretation and analysis of the material read, even if the analysis is incomplete. The work must be presented in a proper academic form, even if there are some flaws in the written or oral expression.

A grade of D: The work displays limited reading and incomplete knowledge, flows in the understanding, inadequate interpretation, limited argumentation. It is presented in adequate English, but with considerable flaws in academic expression.

A grade of F: An overall mark below D indicates that not even the minimal standards defined above have been attained.

The Communication Department assesses the outcome of student learning using a variety of indicators. Generally the following principles prevail in evaluating written and oral work.
a) Written work:
All written work must conform to the academic standards of research and writing (the Writing Centre provides information and guidance on this). The following aspects are taken into consideration when assessing students' written work:

- Correct and relevant knowledge of the field.
- Understanding of the issues involved (expressed in a vigorous analysis).
- Academic writing. This includes correct use of terminology.
- Selection of relevant sources.
- Formulation of thesis statement.
- The ability to use evidence - to build arguments on the basis of the sources the students have accessed.
- The ability to discriminate between the significant and the trivial.
- Ability to develop a consistent argument.
- Logical organisation of material and a clear structure of the paper.
- Independent thought: the students’ ability to assess critically the material they have used and formulate their own position on the subject of their research.
- The quality of writing: the ability to express oneself clearly and consistently, and to write fluently.

b) Oral presentations:
- Correct and relevant knowledge of the field.
- Understanding of the issues involved.
- Correct use of terminology.
- Selection of relevant sources.
- Formulation of position (thesis statement).
- The ability to use evidence - to build arguments on the basis of the sources the students have accessed.
- The ability to discriminate between the significant and the trivial;
- Ability to develop a consistent argument.
- Logical organization and clear structure of the argument.
- Independent thought: the students’ ability to assess critically the material they have used and formulate their own position on the subject of their research.
- Eloquence: the ability to express oneself clearly, consistently, and fluently.
**Additional Course Policies**

**Teaching and Learning Methods**
Interactive Professor Lectures, Expert Lectures from a number of political communication actors and foreign correspondents based in Brussels, Videos, Class Discussions.

**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**

Length: The extent of the paper should be minimum 3000 and maximum 4000 words per student, using a minimum of 10 different academic peer-reviewed references, and an approved Style citation system.

Research Methods. During this course, students could familiarize themselves specifically with the following research methods: Content Analysis, Surveys, Focus Groups or In-depth interviews.

Assignments are due on:

**xxxx (at reception)**

LATE PAPERS AND MAKE UP EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNLESS THERE ARE SERIOUS LEGITIMATE REASONS; EXCUSES MUST BE GIVEN IN WRITING.

**Presentation and Defense of Research Papers**
Apart from summarizing the salient points of the argument/research in the essay, the presenters are required to do additional investigations into the argument/research. They must then present the information to the rest of the class in the clearest possible way. This will generally require at the very least the use of PowerPoint. In addition, the presenter is required to engage the class in discussion of the issues presented in the paper, defend his/her conclusions and provide relevant examples (e.g. footage/recording).

A good presentation demands insight, effort and professionalism. Presentations that lack depth or complexity, or evidence an incomplete grasp of content; and speakers who are careless, unprofessional or have a too-
casual attitude will not do well. You have approximately xx minutes for your presentation— and you are expected to fill this time. Therefore, your initial presentation of the topic should take about 10 minutes/student; your discussion/exercise/footage should account for about 5 minutes/student. You should turn in (directly after you finish presenting) a folder containing your presentation notes/slides.

**Mid Term and Final Exams**
The mid-term and final exams will cover both lecture notes and assigned readings.

**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 Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else’s work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.