Media, according to Dictionary.com, is the means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, that reach or influence people widely.

Literacy is defined as a person's knowledge of a particular subject or field.

“The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses.” Malcolm X

"Whoever controls the media--the images--controls the culture." Allen Ginsberg

“All of us who professionally use the mass media are the shapers of society. We can vulgarize that society. We can brutalize it. Or we can help lift it onto a higher level.” William Bernbach

“Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing.” Robert Bresson
COURSE OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION
Media literacy is designed to help students develop an informed and critical understanding of the nature of the mass media—as information sources, as entertainment, and as an industry—as well as to examine, interpret, and evaluate the messages conveyed therein, and their social, cultural and political implications. This course prepares the student to develop the critical thinking skills, the methods of analysis necessary to interpret media content, and methods of critical writing appropriate to media analysis.

GOALS
- Students will critically interpret the powerful texts and images of a multimedia culture.
- Students will participate more fully in democratic governance and collective wisdom by creating and disseminating effective messages in multiple formats.
- Students will understand what peoples are left out of messages and, as appropriate, participate in establishing more inclusive messages and processes.
- Students will be lifelong learners using rather than accumulating data and updating their creative and participative skills continually and independently.

OBJECTIVES
- Students will use the MediaLit five key questions and concepts to critically analyze messages in different media.
- Students will trace the ownership and interests of communications produced by commercial and other large institutions.
- Students will learn to identify and analyze key issues in media at a given point in time.
- Students will use the insights from producing messages in a medium to help others understand the "tricks of the trade" working from the perspective of media producers.
- Students will write a scholarly research paper demonstrating media literacy competency and critical writing skills.
- Students will develop and present traditional media literacy training for at least one target population.

METHOD
We will be meeting every Tuesday and Thursday between 11:10pm – 12:35pm. The course format will vary, consisting of lectures, group work, discussion, debate, etc. The idea of the course is to produce media literate outcomes, and active exploration of media is the method used to achieve these outcomes. There will be investigation into media functions on numerous levels, and in numerous settings. Our overarching goal is to find the connections between critical thought about media, freedom of expression, and engaged citizenship.
CLASS BLOG
IMPORTANT: A blog is run for Mass12. This blog is where you will find all the class reading handouts, where you will need to participate, and where you will find updated information, announcements, etc. for the course. It is very important that you visit this blog on a regular basis, and become familiar with using it.
The Blog site is: www.hofstramass112.wordpress.com

READINGS
You will need to purchase two texts. All other course readings will be available online or handed out by the instructor in class. Please see below under each course for the online reading that will accompany each day. In addition to the required readings, listed below are some additional books and resources you may want to explore throughout the duration of this course.

Required Texts:
Here Comes Everybody by Clay Shirky, Penguin 2008

Recommended Texts:
- Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide by Henry Jenkins, NYU Press, 2006
- Infotopia: How Many Minds produce Knowledge by Cass R. Sunstein, Oxford University Press, 2006
- White News by Don Heider, LEA, 2000
- New Media and the Managed Citizen by Philip N. Howard, Cambridge University Press, 2008
- Media Literacy: Learning, Literacy, & Contemporary Culture By David Buckingham, Polity Press, 2003
- Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages, 3/e. by Art Silverblatt, Praeger, 2007

More Recommended Texts:

*Other Resources*
For extensive list of Media Literacy-related resources, please visit: [http://www.aocmedialiteracy.org](http://www.aocmedialiteracy.org)

*U.S. Media Literacy Organizations*
- NAMLE: National Association of Media Literacy Education
- ACME: Action Coalition for Media Education
- NMMLP: New Mexico Media Literacy Project
- AEJMC: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication
- NCA: National Communication Association
- MEF: Media Education Foundation
- NML: New Media Literacies (MIT)

**GRADING**
There will be 6 components of the final grade for this course. Each Assignment will follow the framework of the course (the 5 A’s of media literacy education):

1. ACCESS – Tracking Media Ownership (150 points, or 15% of total grade)
2. AWARENESS – Forgotten Worlds (150 points, or 15% of total grade)
3. ASSESSMENT - KnowtheNews Remixer Assignment (150 points, or 15% of total grade)
4. APPRECIATION — Where media works group project (150 points, or 15% of total grade)
5. ACTION - Media Literacy Lesson Plan (200 points, or 20% of total grade)
6. Contributions (200 points, or 20% of total grade)

**TOTAL = 1000 POINTS/10 = Final Grade**

**Components Overview**
This course will obviously require a substantial amount of writing, pre-planning as well as time and personnel management. Media practitioners are also required to write and produce quality work under strict deadline. This course is no exception. **Deadlines will be enforced! No project will be accepted after its due date without severe grading penalties.**
Late work will be marked down a letter grade for every late day. For example, if you hand in your assessment late and it is marked and you deserve an A for the work, you will receive a B if the assignment was late on the same day that it is due. You will receive a C as the highest possible grade if you are more than a day late. Extensions will only be allowed in special circumstances and with formal documentation.

The instructor of this course uses the following system when grading. The letter grades correspond to the following numerical breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.45 - 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89.45 - 93.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86.45 - 89.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.45 - 86.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79.45 - 83.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76.45 - 79.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73.45 - 76.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>69.45 - 73.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>66.45 - 69.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>59.45 - 66.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.44 or Below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Component Overviews

Tracking Media Ownership (Access) – Students will have to analyze their music collection, break down ownership/production, and allocate where their money is spent. Students will also answer a series of questions that track media ownership shifts within the industry.

Forgotten Worlds (Awareness) – Students will explore a media topic that has received little coverage in the media. They will then choose to make a photo essay or comic essay to explore the media issue that is not being covered, why it isn’t being covered, and what more coverage of the issue can do to raise awareness and engagement.

KnowtheNews Remix Assignment (Assessment) – Students will visit www.knowthenews.tv and use their a news remixing tool to create repurposed newscasts. They will create this media piece, and also have to evaluate a fellow students remix.

Where Media Works Multimedia Presentation (Appreciation) – Students will work in small groups, based on their lesson plan topics, to create a multimedia presentation around where media works, i.e. where media makes positive contributions to society around the issue you are dealing with in your lesson plans. Presentations will be around 10-15 minutes in length, and creativity will be rewarded.

Media Literacy Lesson Plan (Action) – Students will each build a media literacy lesson plan around a topic dealing with a current event in the media, and the media’s attention to that issues in its larger context. The lesson plan will include a story, an exercise, a series of analysis criteria, resources, credits, and authorship. This will be peer-edited, and passed in at two stages, first draft and final draft. Students will also have to comment on an existing lesson plan that is already published online.
Contributions – The last 20% of the course grade is made up of attendance, participation, and completion of writing reviews, online chats, film critiques, and other small writing assignments and multimedia contributions required for the course. You will be given a chance to engage with content on a higher level, and are required to hand in your contributions on a regular basis. Failure to contribute to such discussions will drop your grade for the course.

Assignment formats:
- Your papers should be typed, double spaced, and stapled.
- Sources should be noted in APA style. Here are two places on the Internet for easy reference:

ATTENDANCE
You are REQUIRED TO ATTEND ALL CLASSES. Consistent attendance helps you understand the material covered in this course and successfully complete its requirements.

This class adheres to an attendance incentive policy. 3 Absences is the maximum allowable for the course. Any absences beyond this will affect your participation grade. If you miss less than 3 classes, you will earn points for each attendance you have. If you miss two classes, you earn 5 points onto the end of your final grade. If you miss one course, you earn 10 points onto your final grade. If you miss no classes, you earn 15 points onto your final grade. REMEMBER THAT THE FINAL GRADE IS OUT OF 1000 POINTS, SEE GRADING LAYOUT ABOVE.

Absences may be excused if you: (1) have an illness or injury precluding you from attending class; (2) observe a religious holiday that prevents you from class attendance; (3) are required to participate in a university activity by a recognized authority; or (4) experience a compelling, verifiable emergency beyond your control.

If you encounter any one of these circumstances, you must contact me by telephone, e-mail, or in person to let me know you will be absent during a class session. You must also provide acceptable, written documentation of the reason for your absence. Some examples of acceptable documentation would be a physician’s note, traffic accident report, hospital bill, etc., all of which must be dated and signed. Providing documentation does not guarantee an absence will be excused. Other absences (funerals, weddings, etc.) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and may not be considered excused.
Work missed for a known, excused absence must be turned in prior to the absence in order to receive credit. Work missed for an unexcused absence will not be accepted and, thus, will receive no credit. If you come to class late and miss an in-class exercise or assignment, you will not be allowed to make up the work, unless we have made some previous arrangements.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**
All students are expected to abide by the University's Policy on Academic Honesty, which can be found in the Hofstra University Bulletins. Procedures for Handling Violations of Academic Honesty by Students at Hofstra University are detailed in Faculty Policy Series #11 (rev. 2004.) for undergraduates and Faculty Policy Series #11G (rev. 2004) for graduate students.

The University Policy can be found by visiting: [http://bulletin.hofstra.edu/content.php?catoid=28&navoid=706#academic_honesty](http://bulletin.hofstra.edu/content.php?catoid=28&navoid=706#academic_honesty)
Or on the University Senate website:
[http://www.hofstra.edu/Faculty/senate/senate_fps.html](http://www.hofstra.edu/Faculty/senate/senate_fps.html)

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
Disability-related concerns: If you have any documented disability-related concerns that may have an impact upon your performance in this course, please meet with me within the first two weeks of the current semester, so that we can work out the appropriate accommodations. Accommodations are provided on an individualized, as-needed basis after the needs, circumstances and documentation have been evaluated by the appropriate office on campus. Accommodations are provided on an individualized, as-needed basis after the needs, circumstances and documentation have been evaluated by Services for Students with Disabilities. SSD is located in 212 Memorial Hall and can be reached at 516-463-7075 or ssd@hofstra.edu.

**SCHOOL CLOSING OR CLASS UNEXPECTEDLY CANCELLED**
In the event of severe weather, Hofstra may cancel classes. Notice of cancellation is given at [http://www.hofstra.edu/Home/News/news_campusalerts.html](http://www.hofstra.edu/Home/News/news_campusalerts.html) or call (516) 463-SNOW (7669).
## COURSE OUTLINE, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Thurs, Sept. 3</td>
<td>Introductions / Course Overview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Tues, Sept. 8, Thurs, Sept. 10</td>
<td>What is Media Literacy? The Informed Citizen</td>
<td>Gilmor, Principles for a New Media Literacy Handout Key Principles in Media Literacy Handout <em>Film – Idiocracy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Tues, Sept. 15, Thurs, Sept. 17</td>
<td>The 5A’s of Media Literacy (Building a Lesson Plan)</td>
<td>Mihailidis, 5A’s Handout Mihailidis, Beyond Cynicism True Enough - Intro, 1 Love / Hate Media Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Tues, Sept. 22, Thurs, Sept. 24</td>
<td>ACCESS Ownership Colonialism</td>
<td>Ownership Handouts for Debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Tues, Sept. 29, Thurs, Oct. 1</td>
<td>ACCESS Social Networks Debate: Regulators vs. Deregulators</td>
<td>Here Comes Everbody, Intro, 1, 2 - Identity Risk at Facebook: (read article and watch video) <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/click_online/7375772.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/click_online/7375772.stm</a> ACCESS - Tracking Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Tues, Oct. 6, Thurs, Oct. 8</td>
<td>AWARENESS Comparing Global Images – Katrina vs. Tsunami</td>
<td>True Enough - 2, 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| #7 | Tues, Oct. 13  
Thurs, Oct. 15 | AWARENESS  
Control Room  
(brief discussion of  
assignments) | *Film: Control Room* | AWARENESS - Forgotten Worlds Photo Essay |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| #8 | Tues, Oct. 20  
Thurs, Oct. 22 | ASSESSMENT  
Newsworthiness  
What is Journalism  
Ethics of Reporting | Amateur Hour / Out of Print /  
Overload Handouts | |
| #9 | Tues, Oct. 27  
Thurs, Oct. 29 | ASSESSMENT  
Propaganda and Truth in a hypermedia age  
*Debate – New Media & News…* | True Enough - 4, 5  
Faked Photography:  
| #10 | Tues, Nov. 3  
Thurs, Nov. 5 | APPRECIATION  
Social Us & our dMedia Culture | Here Comes Everybody – 3, 4, 5  
*Film TBD* | |
| #11 | Tues, Nov. 10  
Thurs, Nov. 12 | APPRECIATION  
Finding and defining Beauty in images | Here Comes Everybody – 6, 7, 8 | First Draft of Lesson Plan |
| #12 | Tues, Nov. 17  
|     | Thurs, Nov. 19  
| Where Media Works  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multimedia Presentations</th>
<th>none</th>
<th>APPRECIATION - Case Study and Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| #13 | Tues, Nov. 24  
|     | [No class Thurs, Nov. 26]  
| ACTION –  
| Debate: Blame Myself vs. Blame the Media | Here Comes Everybody – 9, 10, 11 | Peer Review of Lesson Plan  
|---|---|---|
| #14 | Tues, Dec. 1  
|     | Thurs, Dec. 3  
| ACTION – What does a Media Literate Person look like? | *Film – One Water*  
|     | True Enough - 6, Epilogue | Active Media Literacy in my life reflection  
|---|---|---|
| #15 | Tues, Dec. 8  
| Snow/Study/Reading Days: Thursday and Friday Dec. 10 and 11 | none | ACTION - LESSON PLANS DUE DURING FINAL EXAM BLOCK  
|---|---|---|