



## UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK IN PRAGUE

**Course:** COM100 Media and Society (6 ECTS/3 US credits)  
**Semester:** Spring 2024  
**Prerequisites:** None  
**Instructor:**  
**Contact:**

### 1. Catalogue Description

An exploration of theories from the areas of communication and psychology to approach key issues in media and society, including mediated violence, sexual representations, values, and more.

### 2. Course Purpose

This course examines the role of the media (books, newspapers, magazines, film, radio, sound recordings, television, and 'new media') in the acquisition of knowledge about the world, and how in turn this knowledge influences human attitudes and behaviours. The course assumes that mass media and the industries that produce media products play significant cultural and political roles in contemporary society, and therefore seeks to acquaint the student with basic issues, media research frameworks, and media effects theories within the broader societal context. The relationship between the media and the public, the increasing influence of new media technologies, and dilemmas facing media policy makers are closely scrutinized.

### 3. Required Readings:

The core textbook for this course is:

Compulsory: Harris, Richard Jackson (2019) *A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication* (7th Edition). New York: Routledge.

It is up to the student to acquire the book before the class. It will be used from the first day of class onwards.

### 4. Additional Readings

Students should expect additional readings to be uploaded to the school e-learning system.

### 5. Learning Outcomes

**At the end of this course, students should be able to:**

**Specialist knowledge,** Students will be able to:

- interpret attitudinal, behavioural, physiological and cognitive effects of media
- define social cognitive, cultivation, uses and gratifications, socialization, agenda setting, and schema theories
- demonstrate understanding of cultural studies and political economy approaches to studying media
- outline basic characteristics of the mass media industries
- characterize political, economic and technological influences on media organizations

**Specialist skills,** Students will be able to:

- explain the role(s) of media in society

- critically evaluate the mass media and their role in constructing social reality
- identify key concepts and principles in communication and media studies
- orient him/herself in the development of media effects theories
- critically assess the impact of new information technologies on society

## 6. Course Schedule

WEEK	THEME	CHAPTERS
1	Mass Communication and Society	CPMC: Ch. 1
2	Approaches to Studying Media	CPMC: Ch. 2
3	The Psychology of Media Use	CPMC: <b>Ch. 3 + Ch. 6 pp. 167-183</b>
4	Media Portrayals of Groups in Society	CPMC: Ch. 5
5	Advertising, Marketing and Society	CPMC: Ch. 6
6	Sports, Music and Religion	CPMC: Ch. 4
7	<b>MIDTERM</b>	<b>1-78</b>
8	Blogs	TBA
9	The News Media and Society	CPMC: Ch. 7
10	Politics and the Media	CPMC: Ch. 8
11	The Media and Violence	CPMC: Ch. 9
12	Sex and the Media	CPMC: Ch. 10
13	Pro-Social Media	CPMC: Ch. 11
14	New Media Technology and Society: Field Trip!	Reading in e-learning
15	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>7-12</b>

## 7. Course Requirements and Grading – the course will be graded on the basis of:

REQUIREMENT	%	DUE DATE
<b>Engagement</b>	<u>15%</u>	Daily
<b>Workshop</b>	<u>15%</u>	Date will be assigned week 2 in class
<b>Midterm</b>	<u>20%</u>	Weeks 1-7
<b>Media Literacy Blog</b>	<u>25%</u>	TBA
<b>Final</b>	<u>25%</u>	Weeks 8-14

**Engagement:** As a grade, engagement is similar to participation, but it means more than just active involvement in the classroom (although that is a basic tenet). Being engaged means demonstrating the following knowledge and skills: (a) being accountable and taking responsibility; (b) leadership; (c) integrity and honesty; (d) being engaged with the topic and the class; (e) striving for excellence in all endeavors. Specifically, it means things like following up without being told to follow up; doing what you are supposed to do when you are supposed to do it and as well as you can do it; arriving on time and ready to “work;” keeping the faculty member aware of any situations that might impinge upon your performance; and fostering a relationship of mutual respect. This includes the use of technology in class, as defined in section 9 below. UNYP policy on attendance applies as outlined in section 8 below. Please familiarize yourself with this policy or see your instructor for clarification.

**Workshop:** A workshop/panel discussion/presentation will make up 15% of the course grade. In pairs, students will conduct a presentation and lead a workshop/discussion of an issue based on one of the subjects included in the course content. Presenters should be prepared to take a ‘side,’ and

discuss aspects of it with the rest of the class, field questions and give qualified answers and analysis. The goal of this assignment is for students to apply issues studied in the course to the 'real-world'.

**Exams:** Two examinations will be taken, one during week seven of the course and a final exam covering all course content during the final examination period. Test format will be a mixture of short answer, true/false, matching, sort answer, and one or two essay questions covering all book, lecture, hand-out and class discussion content.

**Media Literacy Blog:** The major assignment for this class will be due on the last day of classes. It will consist of creating a blog concerning an area of media effects of interest to the student. Guidelines and assignments will be discussed during class 6. Students will be required to turn in a brief proposal during class 7, to ensure that they are on the correct course.

### Grading scale

Letter Grade	Percent (%)	Generally Accepted Meaning	Notes
A	95-100	Outstanding work	x
A-	90-94		x
B+	87-89	Good work, distinctly above the average	x
B	83-86		x
B-	80-82		x
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work	x
C	73-76		x
C-	70-72		x
D+	67-69	Work that is significantly below average	Credits for the course will not transfer to ESC
D	63-66		
D-	60-62		
F	0-59	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for passing the course	No credits awarded

### 8. Key UNYP Policies

**Attendance:** It is your responsibility to show up to class on time. If you are late you will be marked as absent for that hour. **If you miss more than 12 (twelve) hours of class, for any reason, you will automatically fail the entire course. The class policy is standard UNYP policy.**

### Academic Honesty

UNYP's rules on academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating, plagiarism, submitting false information) will be strictly enforced. Please familiarize yourself with the STUDENT HONOUR CODE or ask your instructor for clarification. For examinations: copying from your neighbor, speaking to another student, using a phone or anything similar will result in you failing the test or quiz. On written papers properly note your sources with academic citations. Cutting and pasting from the internet may be considered plagiarism. If you have questions about this, please consult the instructor.

### 9. General Requirements

a) Deadlines in the fields of communication and journalism are critical. Therefore, late assignments and absence from tests are understood as unacceptable. Late submission of work shall be evaluated at a minimum deduction of 10% per day.

b) In the event of illness or emergency affecting your performance in class, consult your instructor in advance.

c) A professional and cooperative approach is encouraged, please see the 'professionalism' section for more details. We will all turn off all personal electronic devices (smart phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) at the beginning of each class in order to promote a respectful learning environment. While we value technology, we also believe these devices can detract from and weaken the communication process inside the classroom. Communication involves more than just a person speaking. By using a computer or texting, students are sending nonverbal messages that are deeply distracting, both to the professor and fellow students. Because we respect the classroom environment, our professors, and our classmates all personal electronic devices will be turned off during class time. Students are expected to attend each class session and participate in a positive way.

### 10. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS):

The students that complete the course will receive 3 American credits. This would be equivalent to 6 ECTS credits. One 3 American credit course (6ECTS) corresponds to 150-180 total hours of academic work. For this course, students are expected to spend time in the following course-related activities:

Class Lectures and exams	45 hours
Reading class related articles	30 hours
Exam preparations	25 hours
Panel Discussion	15 hours
Media Literacy project	30 hours
Review of non-class related materials	15 hours
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TOTAL	160 hours

### 11. Technology Expectations

Assignments, excluding those that are carried out exclusively in class, must be word-processed. Students are assumed to be familiar with the use of internet and in particular with the gathering of data from the wide world web. This will be a necessary tool for carrying out some of the course assignments (i.e. blog or class presentations). In addition to this, students are expected to have and use the access to online databases provided by UNYP.