

Victoria University of Wellington

Media Studies

School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies
Te Kura Tānga Kōrero Ingarihi, Kiriata, Whakaari, Pāpāho

MDIA 401 – Media Theory and Research Methods

Course Outline

2009 Trimester One

Coordination and Teaching

Coordinator: Dr Angi Buettner
Kelburn Parade (KP) 42-44, room 205
Tel.: 463 5070
angi.buettner@vuw.ac.nz
office hours: Tue 1–2

Course format & class times:

Two hour seminars; Tuesdays 10–12; KP 42, room 101.

Trimester dates:

Trimester one teaching dates

Start – Monday 2 March 2009

Mid-trimester break - Monday 13 April until Friday 24 April

End – Friday 5 June

Study/Examination Period - Monday 8 June until Wednesday 1 July

Course delivery, requirements, and expected workload:

This course is taught in seminar style; it combines lecture, discussion, and workshop-style teaching. Students will be expected to prepare the readings for an active engagement in discussion. This course is designed on the assumption that students will be able to commit an average of 20 hours per week, including seminar attendance, academic reading, research and writing.

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Course Content

MDIA 401 equips students with a range of strategies and methodologies for reading and undertaking research in Media Studies. It explains the practices and techniques of scholarly research through a discussion of the field, some of its dominant research paradigms and methods, the tools and techniques available to researchers and the institutional and intellectual imperatives attached to research in its different forms.

This course prepares students for further research at the postgraduate level, including MA and PhD. Students will develop a research topic of their own choice. Even if students do not intend to pursue postgraduate studies, the course will support their concurrent honours work, as well as provide them with research skills applicable to a number of university and workplace contexts. The course is structured into two main parts:

- Part I: Introduction to the field of Media Studies, research, and research skills
- Part II: Media theory, research paradigms, perspectives, and methods.

Learning objectives

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- 1) understand the practice and rules of scholarship and research;
- 2) understand the field of Media Studies, how other disciplines relate to it, and the international perspective on this field of study;
- 3) apply media studies research principles and methods;
- 4) critically evaluate existing research from an informed perspective;
- 5) ability to evaluate opinions, make decisions, and to reflect critically on justifications for decisions using an evidence-based approach;
- 6) collect, analyse, and organise information and ideas, and to convey those ideas clearly and fluently (in written and spoken forms);
- 7) design and conduct a research project in an area of their disciplinary background or a new area of study in which they are able to gain expert guidance from a knowledgeable academic;
- 8) to articulate a research question and an understanding of methodological approaches.

Readings

Weekly readings and further readings depending on your research topic. ①The syllabus and weekly reading list for this course is subject to change depending on students' research topics. ①Please note that you do not have to read in full all the readings listed in the weekly annotated reading list on Blackboard. The list functions as guidance and starting point for your own research. You should make an effort to read as much of the material as possible—it will be very useful to your work and results in this honours class.

The following books have been put on closed reserve:

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*.
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
HM101 A646 M

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- Bell, Judith. *Doing Your Research Project. A Guide for First-Time Researchers in Education, Health and Social Science*. 4th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005.
LB1028 B433 D 4ed
- Bennett, Tony and John Frow. *The Sage Handbook of Cultural Analysis*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2008.
HM 101 S129
- Bertrand, Ina, and Peter Hughes. *Media Research Methods: Audiences, Institutions, Texts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
P91.3 B549 M
- Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G., and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2003.
Q180.55 M4 B7625 C
- Bourdieu, Pierre, et al. *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society*. Cambridge: Polity, 1999.
HN440 M26 M678 E
- Castle, Gregory, ed. *Postcolonial Discourses: An Anthology*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2001.
JV51 P857
- Clifford, James, and George E. Marcus, eds. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
GN307.7 W956
- Creswell, John W., and Vicky L. Plano Clark. *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2007.
H62 C923 D
- Cryer, Pat. *The Research Student's Guide to Success*. 3rd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006.
LB2395 C957 R 3ed
- Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005.
H 62 H236 3ed
- Downing, John D.H., McQuail, Denis, Schlesinger, Philip, and Ellen Wartella, eds. *The Sage Handbook of Media Studies*. London: Sage, 2004.
P90 S129
- Durham, Meenakshi Gigi, and Douglas M. Kellner, eds. *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*. Rev. ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006.
P94.6 M489 A
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London, Routledge, 2001.
P105 F762 M E
- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 6th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003.
- Gregory, Ian. *Ethics in Research*. London: Continuum, 2003.
- Gray, Ann. *Research Practice for Cultural Studies: Ethnographic Methods and Lived Cultures*. London: Sage, 2003.
GN345 G778 R
- Hesmondhalgh, David. *The Cultural Industries*. London: Sage, 2002.
HM621 H585 C

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- Laclau, Ernesto, and Chantal Mouffe. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. 2nd ed. London: Verso, 2001.
HX73 L141 H 2ed
- Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993.
Q175.5 L359 N
- Lewis, Justin, and Toby Miller. *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.
- Lister, Martin, Dovey, Jon, Giddings, Seth, Grant, Iain, and Kieran Kelly. *New Media: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2003.
P96 T42 N532 M
- Marris, Paul, and Sue Thornham, eds. *Media Studies: A Reader*. 2nd ed. New York: New York UP, 2000.
P91 M489 2ed
- Mosco, Vincent. *The Political Economy of Communication: Rethinking and Renewal*. London: Sage, 1996.
P96 E25 M896 P
- Punch, Keith F. *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. London: Sage, 2005.
H62 P984 I 2ed
- Stokes, Jane. *How To Do Media and Cultural Studies*. London: Sage, 2003.
P91.3 S874 H
- Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999.
GN380 S654 D
- Van Dijk, Teun A. "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis". *Discourse & Society*, 4.2 (1993): 249–283.
- Williams, Raymond. *Towards 2000*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1982.
CB161 W726 T

Books on 3-day-loan:

- Macey, David. *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory*. London: Penguin, 2006.
- Payne, Geoff, and Judy Payne. *Key Concepts in Social Research*. London: Sage, 2004.
H62 P346 K
- Petelin, Roslyn, and Marsha Durham. *The Professional Writing Guide: Writing Well and Knowing Why*. South Melbourne: Longman Professional, 1992.
HF5721 P477
- Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. New York: Longman Publishers, 2002.
PE1421 W724 S

Assessment

1. Oral presentation (objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)

Length: 15 min + time for discussion

Weighting: 20%

Due: during seminar times

2. Literature Review (objectives 4–6)

Weighting: 40%

Length: 3000 words

Due: 9 April 2009, by 2 pm

3. Research proposal (objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

Weighting: 40%

Length: 3000

Due: 5 June 2009, by 2 pm

① Specific assessment criteria will be distributed in class. Use **MLA Style** as your reference style for all assignments in this course.

① **Extensions and late assignments.**

- Assignments submitted after the deadline without a written extension will be penalised at a rate of 2% (out of a total of 100) per working day. In other words, if you get 50% for an assignment, after one day your grade will drop to 48%, then 46% the following day etc.
- Late assignments are likely to receive limited feedback.
- The weekend counts for one day (i.e. an assignment due on Friday that is submitted on Monday will receive a 2% penalty).
- Please ensure that you are aware of the time that your assignment is due, as well as the date, as this is the cut-off time utilised in calculating lateness penalties.

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Extension requests must be submitted to the Course Co-ordinator.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General University Requirements

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

PROGRAMME

Part I: The field of Media Studies, research, and research skills

Week 1: 3 March 2009

Introduction

Week 2: 10 March 2009

Media theory and the field of cultural research

Week 3: 17 March 2009

Sources and resources

Week 4: 24 March 2009

Interpretation, evaluation, and presentation of research

Week 5: 31 March 2009

Preparing and producing a research proposal

Part II: Media theory, research paradigms, and methods

Week 6: 7 April 2009

Text as area of research

Mid-trimester break: 13–26 April 2009

Week 7: 28 April 2009

Images and visual data as area of research

Week 8: 5 May 2009

Audience as area of research

Week 9: 12 May 2009

Cultural industries as area of research

Week 10: 19 May 2009

Media technologies as area of research

Week 11: 26 May 2009

Multidisciplinarity, a wealth of methods, and ethics in research

Week 12: 2 June 2009

Production of a Research proposal