

# MDIA 321 Special Topic: Media and the Environment

Trimester 2 2009

24 Points

## TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates:	13 July to 16 October 2009
Study week:	19 to 23 October 2009
Last piece of assessment due:	16 October 2009

## NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Dr Angi Buettner    angi.buettner@vuw.ac.nz 463 5070    Room KP 42 205    Office Hours: Wed 1–2

## CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

### Lectures

Tuesdays            12 noon – 2pm    Room: MY LT101

### Tutorials

Tuesdays            3–4pm            Room: MY 403

Wednesdays        2–3pm            Room: MY 404

Wednesdays        3–4pm            Room: MY 404

## COURSE DELIVERY

Two hour lectures (incl. screenings); one hour tutorials. This course is taught in an interactive lecture and tutorial style; it combines lecture, screenings, discussion, and workshop-style teaching. Students are expected to prepare the weekly course material for an active engagement in discussion and workshopping.

**Please note:** there will be a considerable number of essential screenings during lecture time.

## COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information relevant to this paper including changes, assessment, information on reading material and resources will be available on Blackboard and updated regularly. Announcements will also be posted.

## COURSE CONTENT

MDIA 321 provides an overview of the processes at work in the representations of environmental issues in the media, the arts, or in politics and industries. The media play an important role in communicating information about environmental issues and in shaping environmental values. It is increasingly important to understand the processes underlying the environmental debates in contemporary society.

Students will examine the role of media in communicating environmental issues as well as in shaping our perception and understanding of environmental issues. The course will focus on two perspectives: the use

of, and interaction with, the media by environmental institutions to do their work on the one hand; and, on the other hand, the representations of these issues and organisations within the media.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- 1) review the processes and contexts through and in which different media communicate environmental concerns;
- 2) engage critically with how the media contribute to shaping our perception and understanding of environmental issues;
- 3) evaluate critically the differing practices and agencies engaged in the environmental debate;
- 4) distinguish between the requirements of the various media—particularly traditional broadcast media vs. ‘new’ media forms—representing environmental issues;
- 5) engage in the practice of debate about media issues recognizing the differing requirements of oral, written, and visual discourses.

### EXPECTED WORKLOAD

According to University policy students are expected to spend an average of 18 hours a week on this course which means a total of 216 hours. An indicative breakdown of these hours:

1. Class attendance (12 lectures):	24 hours
2. Tutorial attendance (9 tutorials):	9 hours
3. Reading (assigned and recommended further readings):	100 hours
4. Oral presentation (assign 1):	12 hours
5. Preparation and writing of research essay proposal (assign 2):	16 hours
6. Research essay including research and writing (assign 3):	55 hours

### READINGS

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of VicBooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from VicBooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building. You can order textbooks and student notes online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz) or can email an order or enquiry to [enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz). Books can be couriered to you or they can be picked up from the shop. You will be contacted when they are available.

#### Essential Texts:

MDIA 321 Media and the Environment Book of Readings

#### Recommended Reading:

Beder, Sharon. *Global Spin. The Corporate Assault on Environmentalism*. Rev. ed. Foxhole: Green Books, 2002.

Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G., and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2003.

## ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Oral presentation (all learning objectives, but particularly objective 5)

Oral presentation on a selected topic from the course outline. Ideally, you should choose the topic area you also intend to do your research essay on, so that you can do assignments 1–3 as different stages of working on the same project. Your task is to introduce your topic, identify relevant issues, discuss an example or case study, and identify relevant critical literature. You also have to open your topic up for discussion and debate in class (that is, provide questions and points for discussion, be able to answer questions, etc.).

We will **assign the presentation topics in Week 3**.

Your presentations will be assessed on your delivery and engagement with the topic.

Please submit a written outline/draft of your presentation on the day of your presentation.

**Weighting:** 20%

**Length:** 10 min + time for discussion

**Due:** during tutorials weeks 3–11

### 2. Research essay proposal (all learning objectives)

Your research proposal will provide a description of your research question and a clear identification of your object of study and the purpose of your research essay. For more information and the necessary elements of a research proposal for this course please refer to Appendix 1 of this Course Guide.

**Weighting:** 20%

**Length:** 1500 words

**Due:** 18 August 2009, 5pm

### 3. Research essay (objectives 1–4)

**Weighting:** 50%

**Length:** 3000

**Due:** 16 October 2009, 5pm

### 4. Tutorial participation (all learning objectives)

Tutorial participation will be assessed on both attendance and active participation in tutorial discussions and exercises.

**Weighting:** 10%

**Length:** n/a

**Due:** during tutorials

① Specific assessment criteria will be discussed in class. Please use **MLA** style as your reference style for all assignments in this course.

### **ASSIGNMENT COVER SHEETS**

Assignment cover sheets and extension forms can be found on Blackboard or outside the Programme office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

### **PENALTIES AND EXTENSIONS**

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**

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 (available on your course Blackboard site) 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 Admin Tutor (in MDIA101, 102, 103, and 201), or the Course Co-ordinator (in all other MDIA courses). Tutors cannot grant extensions.

### **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students must submit ALL pieces of assessment in order to pass the course.

### **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 POLICIES AND STATUTES**

You 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>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information 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. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcademic/Publications.aspx>

**COURSE PROGRAMME**

Week 1	14 July	Course Introduction no tutorials and no readings this week
Week 2	21 July	The Rise of Environmentalism no tutorials
Week 3	28 July	Media, the Public Sphere, and Environmental Debate tutorials begin
Week 4	4 August	Risk Communication and Science in the Media tutorials
Week 5	11 Aug	News Production and the Environment tutorials
Week 6	18 Aug	Digital Media and the Rise of Alternative Environmental Media tutorials <b>ASSIGNMENT # 2 due 18 Aug 2009 5pm</b>
<b>Mid Trimester Break:</b> Monday 24 August– Friday 4 September 2009		
Week 7	8 Sep	Advocacy and NGOs tutorials
Week 8	15 Sep	The Environment in Popular Culture tutorials
Week 9	22 Sep	Climate Change tutorials
Week 10	29 Sep	The Environment in Advertising and PR tutorials
Week 11	6 Oct	Policy, Participation, and Citizenship in a ‘Green Public Sphere’ tutorials
Week 12	13 Oct	Course Wrap-up and Essay Workshop no tutorials <b>ASSIGNMENT #3 due 16 October 2009</b>
<b>Study Period:</b> Monday 19 to Friday 23 October 2009		
<b>Examination Period:</b> Tuesday 27 October – Sunday 15 November 2009		