

## MDIA 412-International News

### Trimester 2 2010

Monday 12 July to Saturday 13 November 2010

30 Points

#### TRIMESTER DATES

Teaching dates: Monday 12 July 2010 to Friday 15 October 2010

Mid-trimester break: Monday 23 August to Sunday 5 September 2010

Last piece of assessment due: Monday 8 November, 2010, 1:59 PM

#### WITHDRAWAL DATES

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

#### NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Coordinating Instructor: Dr. Douglas A. Van Belle

Office: FT83-307

Office Hours: 1-2PM Tuesdays and 1-2PM Fridays.

Email: [doug.vanbelle@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:doug.vanbelle@vuw.ac.nz)

#### CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

##### Lectures

Tuesday	2-4PM	81FT-103
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#### COURSE DELIVERY

This is a seminar course that requires the active participation of the students in the classroom.

#### COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Blackboard will be used as a bulletin board to post announcements and material relevant to the course.

Lecture notes **WILL NOT** be posted on Blackboard.

## COURSE CONTENT

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the theories and findings from the primary areas of academic research related to the international news media. Students will develop an understanding of the general state of knowledge in this area of study. They will develop their ability to read, critique and utilize current research in the field and they will develop the first stage of an in-depth understanding of a topical area of study within the field.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By focusing on the dynamics involved, it is expected that students will develop an understanding of the international news media that will allow them to successfully interact with the academic research related to the subject, including preparations for conducting independent research. Specifically students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Read, deconstruct and assess academic research on this subject.
- 2) Identify and analyze connections between academic research publications as they fit within a larger body of knowledge.
- 3) Suggest ways in which future research might be fruitfully conducted from the foundation of the existing body of knowledge.
- 4) Utilize library, database and published resources to find readings appropriate to the subject of study.
- 5) Demonstrate comprehension of the general state of knowledge in the study of international news media.

## EXPECTED WORKLOAD

The average student is expected to commit approximately 300 hours to this course. This means 22 hours of reading, study, assignments and writing in addition to lectures and tutorials each week.

## READINGS

### Essential texts:

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.

Customers 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 customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Akiba A. Cohen (2006) News Around the World. Routledge

MDIA 412 ancillary readings: All ancillary readings are required and all are available free of charge to students, on-line through the VUW library.

Students are also pursue a significant amount of independantly-selected reading material and should be aware that costs may be associated with obtaining books or articles through interlibrary loan.

### ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

This course is internally assessed. Below is an outline of the points of student assessment. These criteria are final for Term 2-2010 and supersede all other descriptions or depictions. All four assessments are required and must be completed to pass this course.

Critical Review Essay	40%
Research Prospectus	40%
Class Participation	10%
Readings Selections Notes	10%
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Total	100%

### Critical Review Essay, Monday 16 August, 2010

The critical review essay is one of the primary written assignments for the course and will be turned in before 1:53 PM, Monday 16 April 2010. The expectation is that the student will examine research publications in an area of study and then write an essay that moves one intellectual step beyond summarizing. The student is expected to use the material within the research read to forward an argument that demonstrates a critical analytical examination of the material. This assignment will require the student to conduct a significant quantity of self-directed reading and library work and students should begin early in order to insure that they can obtain interlibrary loan material in a timely fashion. The assigned length for this assignment is 3,000-3,500 words. However, because the written length of work can vary tremendously in relation to the predominant methodologies of the research being examined, a better rule of thumb is that the student is expected to spend the better part of 2 weeks working on this project, roughly 30-35 hours.

The use of the following writing guide is recommended:

[http://www.cqpress.com/docs/college/VanBelle\\_WritingAppendix.pdf](http://www.cqpress.com/docs/college/VanBelle_WritingAppendix.pdf)

Students are also expected to use a standard style guide for formatting references and footnotes. The formatting and referencing instructions in the Media Studies Essay Guide (posted on blackboard) may be used, but students majoring in other disciplines or familiar with other formats may use an alternative as long as it is applied correctly. The best place to locate these guidelines is on the websites of an academic journal from your discipline.

This assessment focuses primarily on learning objectives 2, 3 and 4

### **Research Prospectus Due Monday 1 November, 2010 1:13 PM**

The research prospectus is intended to build upon the critical review essay. However, students who are unhappy with their critical review essay may opt to undertake the additional work of creating a new literature review. Other than the extra work, there is no penalty in switching topics. This essay will detail an argument addressing the “where next?” question in regards to an area of research inquiry. Students considering moving on to the Masters are encouraged to put this argument in the form of a detailed research proposal which could be combined with an edited version of the critical review essay to create a document that could easily serve as a proposal for a master’s thesis. Other options can include more general arguments about where this field of research should move, what other fields of study could benefit by engaging this field of study in a specific way, or any other argument that tackles a what next question. The assigned length for this assignment is 3,000-3,500 words. However, because the written length of work can vary tremendously in relation to the predominant methodologies of the research being examined, a better rule of thumb is that the student is expected to spend the better part of 2 weeks working on this project, roughly 30-35 hours.

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This assessment focuses primarily on learning objective 3, but it also addresses 2, 4 and 5.

### **Participation**

Student participation in the classroom will be assessed. A key part of this assessment will be the weekly preparation notes. These are notes, questions and discussion points distilled from the readings. They are meant to facilitate discussion and must be completed before each seminar meeting. Two copies should be

brought to the seminar, one to be turned in at the start of the seminar and one for the student to use during the discussion. 7 out of 10 of these must be completed to complete this assessment.

This assessment primarily addresses learning objective 1

### **Readings Selection Notes**

Developing the skills to explore a subject and find readings of significance is a point of emphasis in this course. In the second half of the term, every student will select a portion of the readings for a seminar meeting. Students are expected to find and select one or two key readings from subject area related to their critical review essay. These will then be assigned as reading for the whole class and used as the focus of discussion for one half of a seminar. The student selecting the readings will also provide to the class a bibliography of related readings. This will be turned in to the instructor along with a 2-4 page written discussion of the logic of exploration, selection and rejection of possible readings and relate that to the subject, the starting point (if one was offered by the instructor) and the student's interests.

### **Additional notes on written assignments.**

Always keep a copy of the finished essay, project or workshop assignment. It is your responsibility to submit the assignment on time, and in the event of loss, regardless of fault, it is in your best interest to be able to immediately make a new copy available.

All text should be typed and double-spaced unless otherwise instructed. The lecturer prefers 12-point Times Roman or similar serif font for the main essay text and a 10-point font for footnote/endnote details. Assignments must be stapled and each page numbered. Do not use plastic covers or binders. A stack of essays in plastic covers exhibits many of the same qualities as a stack of live fish.

### **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.

### **EXTENSIONS AND 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 (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. Tutors cannot grant extensions. Work that is submitted late without an extension is subject to penalties:

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

## MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass in this course you must complete:

- Critical Review Essay
- Research Prospectus
- 7 Class Participation notes
- Readings Selections Notes

## CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

## STATEMENT ON LEGIBILITY

You are expected to present work that meets appropriate standards. Work submitted during the course (i. e. work that is internally assessed) should be typed or prepared on a computer. Work submitted in the final examination will obviously be handwritten. You are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', you will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame.

## 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\\_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic/Publications.aspx)

#### COURSE PROGRAMME

Since the students will be selecting most of the readings for our seminar discussions, there is no weekly schedule of readings. We will spend weeks 2 and 3 discussing:

Shoemaker, Pamela J. and Akiba A. Cohen (2006) *News Around the World*. Routledge

Readings for the 4th week and on will be circulated in class as the interests and discoveries the students bring to class lead us through the vast literature related to International News Media.