Course description and objectives:

This course provides a survey of a sub-field in media studies identified as the political economy approach. Here, we will examine economic, political, and social factors that influence media infrastructure, policies, industries, and flows in the global arena. We will study the mainstreaming of cultural products in the global economy, the economics of transnational media industries, and the resultant implications for power (state power, market power). We will analyze media production, labor, the audience and consumption, transnational advertising, and digital capitalism that constitute the sphere of global media today. It is virtually impossible to study political economy of the media without considering the global context. For this reason, the global is integrated in the reading list throughout the semester. Assignments will involve reading responses, discussion leads, and a research paper and presentation.

The objectives of this course are to: (1) develop a keen awareness of the modes in which media institutions interact with political, economic, and social structures to produce cultural commodities in the international/global arena; (2) Integrate the arguments of power and money with questions of regulation; and (3) learn conceptual apparatuses and empirical illustrations necessary to conduct your own analysis of the production, distribution and consumption of these commodities on a global scale.

Required books and readings:

Required books: Available in the University Bookstore


Additional readings will be made available on ICON, or you will be directed to accessible online sources.
ICON
We will be using ICON extensively for course readings and online submission of assignments. ICON will also be used for announcements about changes, unexpected opportunities for guest lectures (should they arise), and other matters. Please check ICON regularly for updates.

Please note: If you need to get in touch with me by e-mail, please send a message to sujatha-sosale@uiowa.edu, and not through ICON.

Grading, assignments, and due dates (also specified in course calendar):

Participation: 15%

Leading discussion with summaries and questions: (4): 20% - various dates; refer revised syllabus on ICON after week 1 of class. Due on ICON on Tuesdays by 5 pm, the day before the class meeting; and in hard copy format at the beginning of class on Wednesday.

Case analysis and review: 15% -- Due Week 7

Research paper: 50% (idea description and broad RQ: 10%; annotated bibliography: 10%; presentation: 10%; final paper: 20%) – various, see below:

1. Description of idea and broad research question: due week 10
2. Annotated bibliography due: Week 12
3. Presentation: Final class period of the semester
4. Final paper due: Monday of final exam week

Presentation of research: Final class period for the semester

Letter grades will be given for all assignments. The percentages are as follows:

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<th>Percentage</th>
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Seminar requirements:

Attendance, Participation, Absences: This course is conducted as a graduate seminar. It calls for a high degree of in-class student participation. Full attendance and completion of the weekly assigned class readings before the class meeting are required, and assumed. Except in cases of emergency, you must notify me of any anticipated absence (such as conference attendance) at the beginning of the semester.

To facilitate this level of participation and discussion, students will select readings for the weekly class meetings from the calendar and bibliography in the syllabus. During the first class meeting, each student will select four readings for class sessions for the semester. This will enable all seminar participants to lead a discussion, in rotation, in class. If no reading selection is made, the instructor will assign readings. Thereafter, students will prepare summaries of the selected material(s) for each week, include discussion questions at the end, and lead the discussion for that segment of the class. More information is available under the section titled “Seminar requirements.” Active participation by way of critical observations, thoughtful comments, and engaged discussion of the subject matter on hand are valued.

Leading discussion with summaries and questions: 4 due per student. Weekly summaries (introduced in the section, “Class Procedures,” above) should be uploaded on ICON and (b) printed copies must be distributed to the seminar members at each session. You will then present the summary to the class and lead the discussion pertaining to that reading or set of readings. Indicate on top of the first page your name and the reading citation for each summary that you write. We will aim to go through all
Presentations in each session. These presentations form part of your participation grade for the course, along with other contributions to the discussions in classes. Typically the summary will not exceed two pages in length. Discussion questions should be listed separately. Plan on presenting for about 15 minutes for each reading/set of readings.

Summaries due: on ICON by noon of the assigned reading class period (Wednesday), and hard copies are due in class.

Other written assignments are as follows. More information and guidelines for each assignment will be provided in class and on ICON.

Case analysis and review: About 750 words in length. This assignment will give you an idea of some of the ways in which a certain country or region’s political economy of the media is studied. It may spark ideas about your own research project for the semester. A list of eight countries and regions (in combination) will be provided during the third week, from which you may select one for analysis and review, or you may select another country or region of your choice. More details and particulars, including requirements will be given in class and posted on ICON. You will share this work in a brief presentation in class.

Case analysis due: on ICON by noon on Wednesday of week 7; hard copies are due in class.

Research project: 4 parts.

The research project gives you an opportunity to explore at length an aspect to global political economy of the media. It may range from a set of industries, a national picture, a regional understanding of the political economy of specific media, to media policies and their relationship to the political economy of a given case. Details and particulars will be given in class and posted on ICON.

Step 1: About 500 words in length. After consultation with the professor you will submit an idea paper along with broad research question you would like to pursue for the paper. Details will be discussed in class.

Research idea paper due: on ICON by noon on Wednesday of week 10; hard copies are due in class.

Step 2: Annotated bibliography. A careful selection of 8 (eight) key sources clustered around your broad research question and annotations for each source are due as the next step. Details will be discussed in class.

Annotated bibliography due: on ICON by noon on Wednesday of week 12; hard copies are due in class.

Step 3: Presentation of the research in the last class period for the semester. Order of presentations will be decided later in the semester.

Step 4: Final paper due on the Monday of exam week (Dec. 13) by 5 pm on ICON. Hard copies are due in my mailbox by 5 pm of that day.

Late submission policy: You are expected to adhere to deadlines in the course. For emergencies causing delays in submission you will need to discuss with me within a week of the occurrence of the emergency.
COURSE CALENDAR

**Note:** The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Please ensure that you have the correct schedule at all times.

**WEEK 1, Aug. 23**  
Course introduction, origins of the field, definitions

(Introduction—pp. 3-11; Chapter 7 – Paper and the Printing Press—pp. 141-170)


Mosco 1, Chapter 2: What is political economy?

**WEEK 2, Aug. 30**  
Liberal perspectives and the market


Handbook Chapter 5: Communication Economy Paths  

**Week 3, Sept. 6**  
Critical perspectives and articulations of power


Handbook Chapter 7: Media Ownership, Concentration, and Control

**Week 4, Sept. 13**  
Concepts I

Mosco 1, Chapter 1: Overview  
Mosco 1, Chapter 3: Schools of thought
Week 5, Sept. 20  Concepts II

Mosco 1, Chapter 6: PEC today
Mosco 1, Chapter 8: Space, time, communication
Mosco 1, Chapter 9: Class, gender, race…

Week 6, Sept. 27  Scarcity and Value creation

Mosco 1, chapter 7: Commodification

Handbook Chapter 8: Maximizing value
Handbook Chapter 9: Advertising
Handbook Chapter 10: Branding


WEEK 7, Oct. 4  Creative industries

Handbook Chapter 1: Moral economies, gifts, public goods
Handbook Chapter 4: Culture Industries
Handbook Chapter 14, Death of Hollywood?


Due today – Case review and analysis paper. Submit on ICON by noon, and submit a hard copy in class.

Week 8, Oct. 11  Ownership and regulation

Handbook Chapter 6: Enterprises, Public, and State
Handbook Chapter 7: Ownership, Concentration, Control
Handbook Chapter 11: Public-Private Dichotomy
Handbook Chapter 25: Global Media Capital and Local Media Policy

WEEK 9, Oct. 18  Labor

Handbook Chapter 16: PE of labor
Handbook Chapter 17: Labor in media industries


**WEEK 10, Oct. 25  Consumption and audience**


Handbook Chapter 18: Prosumers  
Handbook Chapter 19: Audiences  
Handbook Chapter 20: Personal information

*Due today – Research idea and broad RQ paper. Submit on ICON by noon, and submit a hard copy in class.*

**WEEK 11, Nov. 1  Political economy and the digital sphere I**


Mosco 2, Chapter 1: The Cloud ate my homework

**Week 12, Nov. 8  Political economy and the digital sphere II**

Mosco 2, Chapter 2: Cloud computing  
Mosco 2, Chapter 3: Selling the Cloud  
Mosco 2, Chapter 4: Dark clouds  
Mosco 2, Chapter 5: Big Data and Cloud culture

*Due today - Annotated Bibliography for research paper. Submit on ICON by noon, and submit a hard copy in class.*

**WEEK 13, Nov. 15  New directions in the GPEM**

Mosco 1, last chapter: Challenges on the borders, and beyond  

Handbook Chapter 23: New international debates on culture, information, and communication  
Handbook Chapter 24: Global capitalism, temporality, and the political economy

Updates on paper, workshop with questions
WEEK 14, Nov. 22  Thanksgiving recess. No class meeting.

WEEK 15, Dec. Nov. 29  Research day, individual consultations with Sujatha

WEEK 16, Dec. 6  Student presentations

DECEMBER 13  Final paper due

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences: Policies & Resources

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences (Operations Manual, III.15.2, k.11).

Accommodations for Disabilities
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor’s office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College’s Code of Academic Honesty: “I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty.” Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).
CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.