

COM8000: COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Communication and Society

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

8000

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

R8 - Research Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course examines the interplay between mass media and society within interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives in mass communication and other related fields. It covers three major areas: 1) Media theories, ideologies and practices

and their relationship with public opinion; 2) mass communication, constructed reality and social knowledge; and 3) interaction between mass media and society and its consequences. It focuses on such topics as mass media and public opinion, social knowledge and ideology, communication and social theories, mass communication structure and processes, communication technology and culture, network society, and global communication. The students are exposed to a variety of literature that addresses the relationship among society, media and culture, with an emphasis on the impacts mass communication has on individuals and institutions in political, technological, cultural and globalization contexts.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)			
1	Identify and examine the relationship between media and society from interdisciplinary perspectives of scholarly inquiry	20	x		
2	Identify important topics and critical issues related to the structure, production, delivery and consumption processes of mass communication in society	20	x	x	
3	Critically evaluate and analyze these topics and issues in light of theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence at the micro and macro levels	20		x	x
4	Conduct original research on important aspects concerning the interplay between mass media and society using appropriate research methods and present findings in professional format and quality	40	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Group discussion	Group discussion on theory, research, and debates related to mass communication and society	1, 2	Throughout the class
2	Conceptual Analysis	Synthesis and analysis of key concepts and perspectives concerning mass communication and society	2, 3	Throughout the class

3	Literature Research	Writes weekly reports and a final review essay to critically examine the literature.	3, 4	Throughout the class
4	Bibliographic Workshops	Tutorials on methods (e.g., meta-analysis and citation analysis) and tools (e.g., Endnote and Web of Science) to trace evolutionary trends and emerging frontiers of relevant research domains	1, 2, 3, 4	Two or three times per semester
5	Individual Presentation	Presenting results based on critical evaluation of the literature and relevant empirical basis.	1, 2, 3, 4	Throughout the class

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class Discussion on the literature	1, 2, 3, 4	25	-	Yes
2	Weekly Reports on readings assigned by the instructor and supplemented by the students	1, 2, 3, 4	25	-	No
3	Research Paper: to assess students' understanding of the theories and concepts covered in the lectures and readings	3, 4	50	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Additional Information for ATs

The above arrangements for the use of GenAI in assessment tasks are based on the university's guidelines (<https://www.cityu.edu.hk/qac/studentlan/generative-ai/guidelines-on-the-use-of-generative-ai-tools-in-teaching-and-learning-student-2526.pdf>). In general, the use of GenAI tools is generally permitted in formative assessment tasks but generally not permitted for summative assessments such as research papers or examinations for fairness and academic integrity purposes.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Class Discussion (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Articulation and presentation abilities

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent abilities are evidenced in thorough grasp of the assigned readings with ample additional materials supplemented by the student; insightful understanding of key concepts, relevant research, and resulting evidence; articulated abilities to compare different theoretical traditions and to creatively apply theories to practical cases and issues in real life.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good abilities are evidenced in thoughtful grasp of the assigned readings with sufficient additional materials supplemented by the student; good understanding of key concepts, relevant research, and resulting evidence; working abilities for theoretical comparisons and practical applications.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Fair abilities are evidenced in adequate grasp of the assigned readings with some additional materials supplemented by the student; adequate understanding of basic concepts, research, and evidence; adequate abilities for theoretical comparisons or practical applications.

Marginal

(D) Marginal abilities are evidenced in limited grasp of the assigned readings; limited understanding of key concepts, relevant research, and resulting evidence; weak abilities for theoretical comparisons or practical applications.

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Weekly Reports (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Synthetization abilities

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent abilities are evidenced in critical evaluation of existing literature, creative integration of materials from multiple sources, and insightful synthetization of diverse or competing perspectives.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good abilities are evidenced in careful evaluation of existing literature, integration of materials from multiple sources, and effective synthetization of diverse perspectives.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Fair abilities are evidenced in adequate evaluation of existing literature, adequate integration of materials from multiple sources, and synthetization of relevant perspectives.

Marginal

(D) Marginal abilities are evidenced in limited evaluation of existing literature, some but insufficient integration of materials from multiple sources, and vague/lose synthetization of relevant perspectives.

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Research Paper (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Conceptual, operational, and presentational abilities

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent abilities are evidenced in focusing on an important topic, with comprehensive and critical review of relevant literature, support evidence that is closely consistent with the central argument, and clear, concise and insightful presentations of the findings.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good abilities are evidenced in focusing on an important topic, with comprehensive and review of relevant literature, support evidence that is largely consistent with the central argument, and clear presentations.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Fair abilities are evidenced in focusing on an interesting topic, with adequate review of relevant literature, support evidence that is generally related to the central argument, and adequate presentations.

Marginal

(D) Marginal abilities are evidenced in a vague focus, with limited/uncritical review of literature, limited support evidence that is weakly related to the central argument, and weak presentations.

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Class Discussion (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Articulation and presentation abilities

Excellent

"(A+, A, A-) Excellent abilities are evidenced in thorough grasp of the assigned readings with ample additional materials supplemented by the student; insightful understanding of key concepts, relevant research, and resulting evidence; articulated abilities to compare different theoretical traditions and to creatively apply theories to practical cases and issues in real life."

Good

"(B+, B) Good abilities are evidenced in thoughtful grasp of the assigned readings with sufficient additional materials supplemented by the student; good understanding of key concepts, relevant research, and resulting evidence; working abilities for theoretical comparisons and practical applications."

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair or marginal abilities are evidenced in limited grasp of the assigned readings; limited understanding of key concepts, relevant research, and resulting evidence; mediocre weak abilities for theoretical comparisons or practical applications.

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Weekly Reports (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Synthetization abilities

Excellent

"(A+, A, A-) Excellent abilities are evidenced in critical evaluation of existing literature, creative integration of materials from multiple sources, and insightful synthetization of diverse or competing perspectives."

Good

"(B+, B) Good abilities are evidenced in careful evaluation of existing literature, integration of materials from multiple sources, and effective synthetization of diverse perspectives."

Marginal

"(B-, C+, C) Fair or marginal abilities are evidenced in limited evaluation of existing literature, some but mediocre or weak integration of materials from multiple sources, and vague/lose synthetization of relevant perspectives."

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Assessment Task

Research Paper (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Conceptual, operational, and presentational abilities

Excellent

"(A+, A, A-) Excellent abilities are evidenced in focusing on an important topic, with comprehensive and critical review of relevant literature, support evidence that is closely consistent with the central argument, and clear, concise and insightful presentations of the findings."

Good

(B+, B) Good abilities are evidenced in focusing on an important topic, with comprehensive and review of relevant literature, support evidence that is largely consistent with the central argument, and clear presentations.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Fair or marginal abilities are evidenced in a vague focus, with limited/uncritical review of literature, limited support evidence that is mediocre or weakly related to the central argument, and weak presentations.

Failure

(F) Not even reaching marginal levels

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Media and society, media system, public opinions, communication theories, communication effects, ideology, sociology of media, communication and culture, network society, international communication

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	C. Wright Mills (1959), The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press. (*Chs 1,7,8, and especially the Appendix)

2	Jaap van Ginneken (1998), <i>Understanding Global News</i> . Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
3	Edward W. Said (1982), <i>Covering Islam</i> . New York: Pantheon. (*Introduction, pp. 1-64, pp. 127-164)
4	Stuart Hall, ed. (1997), <i>Representation</i> . London: Sage. Chs. 1& 4.
5	Herbert J. Gans (1979), <i>Deciding What's News</i> . New York: Pantheon
6	Gaye Tuchman (1980), <i>Making News</i> . New York: Free Press.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Todd Gitlin (1980), <i>The Whole World is Watching</i> . Berkeley: University of California Press. Michael Schudson (1978), <i>Discovering the News</i> . New York: Basic Books.
2	Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004), <i>Comparing Media Systems</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press.
3	Hanno Hardt (1992), <i>Critical Communication Studies: Communication, History, and Theory in America</i> . New York: Routledge.
4	Chaffee, S. H., & Berger, C. R. (1987). What communication scientists do? In C. R. Berger & S. H. Chaffee (Eds.), <i>Handbook of communication science</i> (pp. 99-122). Sage.
5	Bryant, J., & Miron, D. (2004). Theory and research in mass communication. <i>Journal of Communication</i> 54, 662-704.
6	Walter, N., Cody, M. J., & Ball-Rokeach, S. J. (2018). The ebb and flow of communication research: Seven decades of publication trends and research priorities. <i>Journal of Communication</i> 68(2), 424-440.