



RTV 6807 Telecommunication Outlets and Systems

**Fall 2013
T 4/Th 4-5**

Instructor: Dr. David Ostroff

Office: 2081 Weimer Telephone: 392-0436

E-mail: dostroff@jou.ufl.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course is about the operation of electronic media organizations, and their futures. We will provide an overview of the significant public media systems: broadcasting, satellites, cable, broadband, and wireless mobile systems. Course content and assignments examine the technologies of these systems, their business structures, and the political and social environments in which they operate.

The course is also designed to acquaint you with basic terminologies, vocabulary, and concepts to enable you to thrive in later courses.

We will explore these topics within the context of qualitative forecasting techniques, familiarizing you with sources of information and analytical techniques.

This course is intended to:

Familiarize you with emerging and emergent technologies affecting the electronic media industries.

Encourage your thinking about the impacts of these technologies on existing media and on your professional and personal environments.

Familiarize you with relevant information sources and their uses.

Not every assignment, discussion or other class activity directly complements the others. You should leave the course with some nuts and bolts knowledge as well as broader understandings of the electronic media industries in the U.S. and elsewhere, and of how to apply qualitative analysis to questions of media organization behavior.

Learning, therefore, will come through a number of approaches. There will be lectures, mediated presentations, and assigned readings, but you should also expect to *learn a significant amount through your own reading and research*.

The primary focus for this course is on U.S. electronic media industries, although we will explore the globalization of the media industries in ownership, content distribution, and obvious industries such cases as communication satellites. Students who are familiar with the media systems in other countries are *strongly encouraged* to contribute their knowledge to provide perspective to our discussions of media outlets and systems.



Course Requirements and Assignments:

Reading Assignments:

There is no required textbook for this course. This is a very rapidly changing field and no single book sufficiently covers the field in a comprehensive and sophisticated manner. Therefore readings will also come from a variety of sources. Reading assignments will be placed on posted on the e-learning website, distributed in class, or you will be provided with a URL from which to access the article.

To be sure you have access to the most recent information I have found it useful to select many of the reading materials just before we approach a topic—therefore, very few of the reading assignments are listed in the course outline, below. You will receive periodic schedule updates. Many reading assignments will come from trade publications and other periodicals.

One useful source of information is the website “HowStuffWorks” (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/>). These provide relatively brief articles about communication technologies. You will go to the website to access the readings listed below.

Written Assignments:

All assignments are due at the start of class on the listed due date. Failure to meet that requirement may result in a grade of “E” for the assignment.

Papers are to be typed/printed. Papers are evaluated on these bases:

- ⇒Meeting the content requirements of the assignment
- ⇒Completeness and currency of information
- ⇒Accuracy
- ⇒Logical presentation (Do you provide adequate explanation of your premises?
Is sufficient evidence provided to support your premises? Is your
conclusion a reasonable deduction from those premises?)
- ⇒Writing Style (spelling, grammar, clarity of statements)

You may use either the MLA or APA style guidelines in writing your papers.

Of course, all university policies regarding plagiarism are enforced.

If you are unsure about how to properly cite your sources, please ask!

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

For more information about academic honesty, contact, Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Description of Assignments

Examinations (40% of Course Grade)

You will take two (2) examinations during the course of the semester.. Exams will be some combination of short answer, identification/definitions, and essay. Exams will cover reading assignments and classroom activities (lectures/discussions, media presentations, guest speakers, etc.).

Each exam is 20% of your course grade

Media Organization Report (10% of Course Grade)

You will write and present in class a report about a media organization. This will include a discussion of the evolution of the company, its present structure, organization, and activities. The report should be about 7-10 pages in length, plus references, and the oral presentation will be about 15 minutes. You must use at least three sources that are not part of the corporation's website or publications.

Media Technology Scenario (30% of Course Grade)

You will present a written *scenario* about a technology affecting (or which might affect) the electronic media industries. ***The timeframe is @ 2020.*** A scenario is a narrative description of future events. In many cases writers will offer alternative scenarios, depending on variable circumstances. For example, you might have one scenario for how you will spend the weekend if you complete your class assignments by Friday, and a different scenario for the weekend if you don't. Of course, most circumstances are more complicated. Thus, in addition to the variable of completing assignments, you might also consider whether or not your student loan check arrives, whether your roommate is going to be away, and whether or not that hurricane in the Caribbean turns towards the north. As you can see, the various combinations and permutations can all lead to a different scenario.

Your scenario will be 12-15 pages, plus bibliography. You will provide evidence in support of your predicted conditions (properly cited); e.g., if you describe a situation in which the average work week is 20 hours, then provide citations to the information that led you to that conclusion. If you describe a situation in which all media are owned either by News Corp. or by Disney, provide cites and evidence to support your conclusion. As should be clear, then, readings assigned for class are not sufficient for provide you with all of the information to complete you will need to complete these scenarios. Giving you an opportunity to learn about where to find information and the types of sources available is one of the goals of this course.

Additional details about the assignment will be distributed in class during the early part of the semester.

Class Participation (20% of Course Grade)

- This is a graduate course: Attendance is expected at all sessions. There are no unexcused absences.
- Excused absences are allowed for documented illnesses or family emergencies. Jobs, other classes, friends' weddings, and the like are not emergencies. If you take ill and must miss more than a couple of classes, you might want to investigate taking an excused withdrawal.

- Be prepared for all class sessions. Be able and willing to participate. During class discussions be courteous to other class members.

Information on current University of Florida grading policies can be found at:
<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Course Outline and Partial Reading List (Schedule Subject to Change)

Th Aug 22-T Sep 3: Introduction: What's Happening Out There? and Review Foundations: Industry Structure; Regulatory and Policy Environment; Technology

The Twenty-First Century Media Industry: Economic and Managerial Implications in the Age of New Media Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010 Ch 1, Susan Smith and John Allen Hendricks, "New Media, New Ideas, or New Headaches" Ch 2, Mary Jackson Pitts and Lily Zeng, "Media Management: The Changing Media Industry and Adaptability"

Joan Van Tassell and Lisa Poe-Howfield, *Managing Electronic Media*, Ch 1, "The Media Industries: Segments, Structures, and Similarities" and Ch 14 "Legal and Regulatory Issues"

Elizabeth C. Hanson, *The Information Revolution and World Politics*, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008. Chapter 3, "The Globalization of Communication"

Th Sep 5-Th Sep 19 Analytical Tools; Forecasting, Information Sources

A. Michael Noll, *The Evolution of Media* Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007. Part IV "Thinking Strategically"

Lucy Kung, *Strategic Management in the Media* London: Sage Publications, 2008. Ch 3 "Trends in the Strategic Environment," and Ch 5 "Strategy in the Media Industries"

Tues September 24 Media Organization Report Due and Presented in Class

Th Sept 26 -T Oct 15 **Technologies**

“HowStuffWorks” (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/>):

“How HD Radio Works,” “How Digital Television Works,” “How HDTV Works”

Thursday Oct 10 No class meeting--Advisory Council

Tuesday October 15 Exam 1

T Oct 17-Th Nov 7 **Industries**

David Ostroff, “Engine of Content Diversity: A Brief Chronicle of Communication Satellite Policies” in Sofie Van Bauwel, Elke Van Damme and Hans Verstraeten (eds), *Diverse Media-Werelden* Gent: Academia Press, 2010

Tuesday November 12 Exam 2

Th Nov 14-T Dec 3 **Issues**

“HowStuffWorks” (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/>):

“How Cable Television Works,” “How Cable Modems Work,” and “How Fiber Optics Work”

Th Nov 14 –Th Nov 26: **Telcos, Internet and other Mobile Services**

Tuesday Nov 19—no class meeting

“HowStuffWorks” (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/>):

“How Telephones Work,” “How Internet Infrastructure Works,” “How DSL Works,” “How TV Phones Work,” “How Municipal WiFi Works”

John Seabrook, “Streaming Dreams: You Tube Turns Pro,” *The New Yorker*, January 16, 2012

Friday December 14 Final Written Scenario Due