Communication and the Environment
COM 418 / ENVIR 418
Spring 2009

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Class meets: Mon/Wed 1:30 – 3:20, CMU 104
Office hours: Mon/Wed 12:30 – 1:20, CMU 340-L

Course Goals:
This class will cover issues in media, public opinion, and social movements with regard to the environment. The course is designed to meet the following primary objectives:

1) Conduct and report original research on media and the environment
2) Articulate institutional characteristics of the news media which contribute to its representation of the environment
3) Articulate the media – public opinion relationship with regard to the environment
4) Recognize and discuss the relationship of these forces with the broader environmental social movement

Assignments:
There will be two smaller papers and a final paper in this class.

The two smaller papers will each reflect original research employing course concepts. Students will select a methodology for analysis and a theoretical lens for each paper. For paper 1, students may select from the topics covered in weeks 4-5; for paper 2, available topics include those from weeks 6-8. Papers should be 5-6 pages each, plus references (min. 5 references).

The final paper will be an extension of either one of the smaller papers. It may also include a public opinion component. It should be 10-12 pages in length, plus references. The references should be minimum 10, at least 3 of which should be sources beyond the course readings.

Each paper will follow a standard research report format, as exemplified in the many readings we will do in this class. Please:

- use APA format
- 12 point Times New Roman font
- 1” margins
- staple your papers
- proofread carefully (points will be deducted for grammatical and spelling errors)
- do not use contractions or “you” (points will be deducted for these usages)

Assessment:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>2 smaller papers</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>40 pts</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
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Note: There are no exams in this class, and not all course topics will be reflected in your papers. Therefore, your active class participation is critical.

Data:
For this class, you will need to collect some data to analyze. We will analyze these data from various theoretical perspectives and with various media analysis methods. You will use the same
data for each analysis throughout the quarter. Your data should be media, and may be one of the following:

- print media from two sources representing two diverse ideologies
- transcripts of broadcast media sources representing two diverse ideologies
- electronic media which complies with normative journalistic standards (i.e. no blogs) and represents two diverse ideologies
- a documentary film – transcribed with language and commentary on visual features

Please collect a random sample of 10 articles from each source (except the documentary film option; use www.randomizer.org). You will need 1 electronic copy of your data and 2 hard copies of your data. Please bring the hard copies to class.

Course Policies:
In-class: We will be spending our class time discussing the concepts presented in the readings and conducting preliminary analyses of our own and each others’ data. Please be sure to come to class prepared, having read the assigned readings for the day and bringing your datasets to class. Late papers will be accepted with a deduction of 5 points for each business day the paper is late. Please submit all late papers via e-mail.
Accommodations: If you require accommodations for university-recognized events, activities, or disabilities, please provide me with official university documentation as soon as possible.

Required Texts:

Course pack available at Ram’s copy center on University. Materials also available on e-reserves.

Course Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<td>Readings due</td>
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**Week 1**
3/30  Intro, sampling  ---

4/1  Sampling
Read some methods sections of assigned articles

**Week 2**
4/6  CLASS CANCELED  ---

4/8  Media industry  Dataset due
(Devereux Ch 2)
(Devereux Ch 3)


**Week 3**

4/13 News values
(Devereux Ch 10)

4/15 Accuracy/meaning construction
DeFleur, & Ball-Rokeach. Mass communication and the construction of meaning. In The effects of mass communication (pp. 228-271).

**Week 4**

4/20 Semiotics
Berger Ch 1

4/22 Discourse Analysis
(Devereux Ch 4)
Carvalho, A. (2007). Ideological cultures and media discourses on scientific knowledge: re-reading news on climate change. Public Understanding of Science, 16(2), 223.

**Week 5**

4/27 Marxist perspective
Berger Ch 2

4/29 Framing
(Devereux Ch 6)


**Week 6**

5/4  **Textual analysis**  **Paper 1 due**

(Devereux Ch 11)


(Devereux Ch 5)


5/6  **Psychoanalytic criticism**

Berger Ch 3

Berger Ch 7

**Week 7**

5/11  **Content Analysis**


5/13  **Sociological / content analysis**

Berger Ch 4


**Week 8**

5/18  **Rhetoric**


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5/20 Media & politics
(Devereux Ch 9)


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**Week 9**

5/25 CLASS CANCELED – HOLIDAY

5/27 Public opinion Paper 2 due

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**Week 10**

6/1 Public opinion


6/3 Social movement


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Finals week:
Monday, June 8, 4:20 p.m.
Final paper due at final exam time (4:20 p.m.) via email

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