



The University of Suwon
The History and Politics of US Mass Media Industry (E-learning)
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Course introduction

The purpose of this course is to give students an insight of the relation between the American media industry and historical facts, keeping an open perspective on the political motivations that have determined specific outcomes throughout time. History is generally seen as a purely academic discipline that is mainly studied and portrayed in books and specialized academic literature. However, history has been very often portrayed by other means such as movies and documentaries. This class will analyse the relationship between history, politics and the media industry, focusing though not exclusively on the American media industry. This course will teach the students how to analyse mass media material in a critical way, by watching different productions and performing specific tasks aimed at developing critical insight and good analytical skills. This is a course best suited to students with intermediate level English skills, who are humanities or social sciences majors, and either interested in mass media studies, communication, international relations, politics, history and cultural studies. The class is built around the English-language material.

Course Format

This course has an e-learning format, meaning that virtual lectures, discussion and seminars will be conducted in the virtual classroom environment on the Canvas platform. All homework and other related activities are transmitted over the Canvas website. Unfortunately, the teacher does not have enough time available to instruct the students on the use of the Canvas platform. The Canvas platform is somehow a complex tool to use; therefore, it is highly recommended that the students are either tech savvy or that they spend some time on their own to familiarise with the Canvas platform, using the training lectures provided on the first module of the class which are also freely available on YouTube. The teacher is not a Canvas technician, henceforth he is not responsible for the student inability to use the Canvas platform neither for any related failure of the Canvas system. The final responsibility for the learning of the use of the Canvas platform and its maintenance remains with the student and with the relevant technology department.

Course objectives

After completing the course, students will;

- 1) Critically evaluate mass media content and related literary material.
- 2) Put historical events into an analytical perspective in order to understand, describe and explain them using a comparative methodology.

- 3) Assess and evaluate the historical and political context in which media content was produced;
- 4) Make an independent critical evaluation of the relationship between true historical events and the stories reproduced in media or fictional material.
- 5) Improve presentation and writing skills, especially in English.

Course language

This course is taught completely in English. Students will need to have a good level of English to read and understand the contents and to complete the assignments.

Course format

The course will be taught remotely through the electronic platform named Canvas. Although there is not a specified time to attend class every week, students are required to participate actively in the activities proposed in the Canvas virtual class by doing their weekly tasks. Weekly tasks may include one or more of the following activities: reading books, journals, newspapers, literary material, watching films, answering questionnaires, prepare presentations and write short critical reports. Students must actively participate in weekly activities. Students must act respectfully and courteously in all discussions and group activities.

Course guidelines, requirements and expectations

All students must;

- use the required text/material for the class
- act respectfully and courteously in class at all times.
- participate actively in all classes.
- complete all required readings, assignments and exams.

Required texts/materials

All readings, films, and presentations will be provided online through Canvas. The Course Websites:

Course website

University of Suwon Canvas

Course policies

There is a grading curve system for this course. The grading system follows the university grading curve standard system. Subjective and overall performance is measured by participation, and the quality of the contributions to class activities such as, class discussions, quiz performance and a final project. Every week there will be some activity for the students to complete, such as watching a movie, reading some document, watch a PowerPoint presentation and answer a questionnaire.

Final Project

Students are also required to complete a final project that can take the form of a group presentation, using any presentation software of their choice (i.e. Google Slides, PowerPoint, Prezi etc.); a final essay either as a single effort or a group work; an entry into Wikipedia that

will be published on the internet and made available for the general public; or any other format that the student may choose to use as long as it is pre-approved by the course instructor.

In the final project, the students will have to choose a movie amongst those watched during the semester and make a thorough analysis on the technique used for the filming, the kind of technology involved, evaluating also the historical and political context of the moment the film was produced and presented to the public. As part of the final project, the students will be required to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate how the movie was received by the general public and the cinematographic critics. Students will also be required to determine whether to what extent and why the movie was either loyal or not to the historical facts represented. Cheating is not tolerated and will result in an automatic F. Please, feel free to contact the teacher for any additional bibliographical material, feedback, correction or help. Students can also come to see the teacher in his office hours, in order to ask for help or discuss any other class-related matter.

Grading: The grading for this course is aligned with the policy of the University of Suwon and it is based on a relative curve grading system. There are four elements that will be taken into consideration for the evaluation of the students. Those are:

- 1) Homework = 40%
- 2) Midterm Project= 30%
- 4) Final project= 30%

Elective Schedule

Date	Topic	Activity
Module 1	Intro to class syllabus and class requirements.	Read all instructions
Module 2	The evolution of the media industry, from black and white, silent early production to post WWII cinema. From a European to an American centric world: a new hegemonic message for a new balance of power.	Read assigned material; perform independent research; watch movie “Casablanca”; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire.
Module 3	Gandhi: the beginning of the end of British hegemony in the international system and the process of decolonization and modernization of the world.	Read assigned material; perform independent research; watch movie “Gandhi”; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire.
Module 4	JFK: The death of hope and the beginning of the democratic downfall. Midterm Project.	Read assigned material; perform independent research; watch movie “JFK”; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire.
Module 5	Apocalypse Now: The Vietnam War and critical voice within Hollywood.	Watch PowerPoint presentation; watch the movie “Apocalypse Now”; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire.

Module 6	Munich: The US, Israel and the Arab/Muslim World. The history of 100 years long political crisis	Read assigned material; perform independent research; watch the movie "Munich"; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire.
Module 7	Nixon: one of the darkest moments in contemporary US history and the needs for a renewed system based on peace, hope and democratic accountability.	Read assigned material; perform independent research; watch the movie "Nixon"; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire.
Module 8	In the Name of the Father: The Irish question and the last stage of British colonial imperialism. Final Project.	Read assigned material; perform independent research; watch the movie "In the name of the father"; do homework; answer attendance questionnaire. Present your final project.

NOTE: The course content listed above is subject to change.