

COURSE SYLLABUS

TITLE:	Theoretical Basis of Mass Communication
COURSE CODE:	CMU 103
PREREQUISITE:	CMU 101
CREDITS:	3 credits, 3 weekly hours, 1 semester

DESCRIPTION

Introduction to theories and classic and contemporary concepts related to communication processes. The course emphasizes on mass media, new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). It presents the interdisciplinary nature of theory and research different approaches and the historic evolution of theories of mass communication. languages and new technologies as to their cultural and sociological impact. The course also emphasizes theoretical application to the analysis of professional, ethical and theoretical communication problems of modern society. The course is intended for Communication students.

JUSTIFICATION

Communication professionals need to develop a theoretical base to sustain their knowledge of the application of technology and communication techniques, and foster critical thinking and critical evaluation of their strategies, actions, and their effects. This course enables future communicators to properly use the scientific-theoretical language of their profession. In also provides essential analytical tools and criteria to stimulate excellency and ethical commitment in their professional practice, up to par with their training as researchers and active scholars in their discipline.

SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

Transversal skills

1. Written communication
2. Critical questioning
3. Ethical sense
4. Research

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

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1. Analyze and synthesize communication theories discussed in the course.
2. Explain the importance and use of theoretical knowledge in professional practice, as well as research in the communication field.
3. Distinguish between different sciences, interdisciplinary approaches and theories that study mass communication.
4. Define and use concepts and theoretical communication terms.
5. Describe and compare different stages and tendencies in the theoretical evolution of mass communication.
6. Apply flexibility and fluency to the communication process, applying learned theories.
7. Choose the appropriate theories to learn to decode human communication.
8. Analyze current practices in the communication industry and its social, economic, political, ideological and cultural impact in the national, as well as, the global context.
9. Be able to place theories in their historical context, taking into account time, actors, social relationships, as well as their needs and interests, and also be able to react from their own contexts.
10. Identify and analyze ethical controversies in Communication theory, practice and research.
11. Develop an open attitude towards new information, situations and methodologies.
12. Meditate about their own behavior and of others' as citizens and professionals of a digital culture.
13. Modify their own ideas in light of new theories and information.

COURSE CONTENT:

I Basic concepts

- A. Theory, myth, dogmas, paradigm, models, system, process, communication, language, approach, comunicología.

II Theory and professional ethics

- A. Importance of theoretical knowledge for the professional communications researcher
- B. Ethics in communication and research, professional value and relationship to course content

III Approaches and research methods in mass media theory

- A. Interdisciplinary approaches (sociological, psychological, political, economic, cultural, historic, etc.)

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- B. Evolution approach of languages and media (oral, ritual, iconic, symbolic, written, media, mass media, and digital)
- C. Functionalist and critical approaches
- D. Quantitative and qualitative studies

IV. Mass Communication Theories

A. Theoretical background

- 1. sophisticated rhetoric and speaker's ethics
- 2. Aristotelian model and effective discourse

B. First Mass Communication Theories

- 1. Almighty media v. individual variables
- 2. Limited and long term effects
- 3. Functional analysis model – H. Lasswell

C. Mass Media and Ideology

- 1. The Frankfurt School theories
- 2. Critical approach to Mass Media Industry

D. Mass Media, technology and social change

- 1. The Canadian School
- 2. Mass Media in the “global village”

E. Mass Media and culture

- 3. Cultural Imperialism
- 4. Hegemony Theory
- 5. Cultural Studies

F. Structural Approach

- 6. Linguistics to semiotics/semiology
- 7. Languages, signs and meanings

G. Mass media and public opinion

- 8. Cultivation theory and mainstreaming effect
- 9. Agenda Establishing Theory
- 10. Mediatic Auto-censorship

11. Silence spiral

H. Audiences and Mass Media

12. Needs and Motivations

13. Uses and gratifications

14. Imitation, fashion and violence

15. Consumers or citizens?

I. Mass Media, globalization and identity

16. Hermeneutic School: symbols ownership

17. Mediatic perception of identity and 'alternateness'

V. Emergent theories for the Digital Era

A. Multimedia convergence and its impact

B. Digital visual culture: virtual reality, augmented reality, simulations, hyper-reality and show business

C. Technological Ideology: utopias and the digital gap

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Class discussion of theories, concepts and assigned readings. Examples of studied concepts applied to the national and international contexts. Individual and group oral and written presentations. Conferences. Class exercises. Conferences and extracurricular activities. Magazines and Internet resources.

EVALUATIONS

Parcial exams or equivalent work 75%

Final Exam or final paper 25%

REFERENCES

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Ángel Villegas, S.M. (s.f.). Resumen de *Pantalla total* de Jean Baudrillard: sociología del consumo. Rosario, Argentina: *Centro de Estudios e Investigación de Medicina y Arte*. Recuperado de http://www.medicinayarte.com/img/pantalla_total_baudrillard.pdf

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Audiovisual and Internet Resources

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COMUNICACIÓN Y MEDIOS. En <http://www.comunicacionymedios.com/> .

Communication, Cultural and Media Studies en www.ccms-infobase.com

Comunicología@. UIA, México. <http://revistacomunicologia.org/index>.

DIÁLOGOS de la Comunicación. Revista teórica, Federación Latinoamericana de Facultades de Comunicación Social, FELAFACS. En <http://felafacs.org>

Infoamérica.org. El Portal de la Comunicación. En http://www.infoamerica.org/teoria/teoricos_uno.htm

InfoEtica 2000, III Congreso Int. UNESCO: Ciberespacio: desafíos éticos, jurídicos y sociales.http://webworld.unesco.org/infoethics2000/es_papers.html

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