**Class code**
MCC – UE 9014 - 001

**Instructor Details**
Tomas Trampota
t rampota@fsv.cuni.cz
222112111
Faculty of Social sciences, Charles University, Smetanovo nabrezi 6, Monday: 3pm. -5 pm.

**Class Details**
Introduction to Media criticism

Tuesday, Thursday 3pm- 4.30pm
Location to be confirmed.

**Class Description**
An Introduction to Media criticism provides an overview of critical thinking on contemporary media production, media outcomes and media systems. Students will understand key constraints shaping the contents of mediated communication including economical, technological, political and cultural constraints. The course is based on lectures mixed with discussions of the readings. On three field trips students will visit key media organisations in Prague (Czech television, Czech Press agency and Czech Radio). Students will understand media logic, media functions and malfunctions within postmodern society, media effects on life style and political and economical behavior.

**Desired Outcomes**
Develop critical awareness of the media environment.
Develop familiarity with concepts, themes and theoretical approaches of media criticism and the terms associated with these approaches.
Develop ability to adapt the media criticism concepts and frameworks for own analyses of media communication outcomes.

**Assessment Components**
- Class participation 20 %
- Midterm exam 25 %
- Paper presentation 25 %
  
  15 minutes presentation on the base of analyses of media content.
  
  Paper – 5 pages single spaced.
- Final exam 30 %

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent knowledge of concepts and issues presented within the semester. Ability to apply theoretical critical frameworks in practical analyses of media outcome. Excellent paper, midterm exam and final exam. Ability to develop own critical ideas on the base of existing critical theories. Exceptional level of accurate, clear and analytical writing.

**Grade B:** Very good knowledge of concepts and issues presented within the semester. Understanding and ability to explain basic critical theories and approaches learnt during semester. Ability to apply methodology for critical analyses of media outcome. Very good level of written work but falling short of the highest level.

**Grade C:** Good knowledge of concepts and issues presented within the semester. Ability to reproduce basic methodology for analyses of media contents. Satisfactory and sufficiently accurate
written work.

**Grade D:** Adequate knowledge of concepts and critical approaches. Adequate level of written work but weakly analytical.

**Grade F:** No understanding of concepts and approaches taught. Poorly presented written work.

### Grade Conversion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B++</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C++</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>D++</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>65-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 65</td>
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</table>

### Grading Policy

NYU Prague aims to have grading standards and results similar to those that prevail at Washington Square. At the College of Arts and Sciences, roughly 39% of all final grades are in the B+ to B- range, and 50% in the A/A- range. We have therefore adopted the following grading guideline: in any non-Stern course, class teachers should try to ensure that no more than 50% of the class receives an A or A-.

A guideline is not a curve. A guideline is just that—it gives an ideal benchmark for the distribution of grades towards which we work.

### Attendance Policy

Each unexcused absence will result in your final grade being reduced by 3%. Absences only for medical reasons will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). Absences due to travel will not be excused.

### Late Submission of Work

Work submitted with the delay will not be accepted.

### Plagiarism Policy

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as though it were one’s own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one’s own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from
another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer’s work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student’s intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science’s Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook).

Klaus Bruhn Jensen (ed.) A handbook of media and communication research. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies. (pp. 1-19 of the origin)

James Curran Mass Media and Democracy. In James Curran, Michael Gurevitch Mass Media and Society. (pp. 13–30 of the reader)

Pamela Shoemaker, Stephen Reese. Mediating the Message (pp. 45–58 of the reader)

Asa Briggs, Peter Burke. A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet. (pp. 13–60 of the origin)

Daniel Hallin, Paolo Mancini. Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics. (pp. 31–44 of the reader)

Tracey, M.: Decline and Fall of Public service broadcasting. (pp. 3–33 of the origin)


Denis McQuail. Mass Media in the Public Interest. Towards a Framework of Norms for Media Performance. In James Curran, Michael Gurevitch Mass Media and Society. (pp. 69–78 of the reader)

Michael Pickering. The Politics of Representation. (pp. 79–90 of the reader)

John Fiske. Introduction to Communication Studies. (pp. 91–104 of the reader)


Naomi Klein. No Logo. (pp. 165–194 of the origin)

Peter Golding and Graham Murdock. Culture, Communication and Political Economy. In James...
Curran, Michael Gurevitch. *Mass Media and Society.* (pp. 125 – 136 of the reader)

*Reading*: Boyd- Barrett, Terhi Rantanen: The Globalization of News. (pp. 1- 14 of the origin)

Neil Postman. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (pp. 151 – 160 of the reader)


Fan Carter: Teenage magazines, lifestyle and consumer culture. *In David Bell and Joanne Hollows: Ordinary Lifestyles* (pp. 173- 182 of the reader)

Teun A. van Dijk. *Ideology* (pp. 195 – 202 of the reader)

Garth S. Jowett, Victoria O’Donnell. Propaganda and Persuasion (pp. 1 – 31 of the origin)

William Dinan and David Miller. *Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy* (pp. 215 – 232 of the reader)

Shearon A. Lowery a Melvin L. DeFleur. *Milestones in Mass Communication Research. Media Effects* (pp. 233 – 246 of the reader)

Marita Sturken, Lisa Cartwright. Practices of Looking. An Introduction to visual culture (pp. 10 – 41 of the origin)

Jan van Dijk. *The Network Society.* (pp. 195 – 202 of the reader)

Asa Briggs, Peter Burke. *A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet.* (pp. 237- 274 of the origin)

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**Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-L Library)**

**Internet Research Guidelines**

**Additional Required Equipment**

### Session 1

**Overview of the course**

**Tuesday, February 12**

### Session 2

**Media studies and scientific approaches to mediated communication.**

**Thursday, February 14**

Reading: Jensen, K. B. (ed.) A handbook of media and communication research. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies. (pp. 1- 19)
Session 3
Tuesday, February 19
Functions and disfunctions of mediated communication.

Reading: James Curran Mass Media and Democracy. In James Curran, Michael Gurevitch Mass Media and Society. (pp. 13–30 of the reader)

Session 4
Thursday, February 21
Living in media system: Comparing media landscapes.

Reading: Daniel Hallin, Paolo Mancini. Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics. (pp. 31-44 of the reader)

Session 5
Friday, February 22
From print to electronic communication.

Reading: Asa Briggs, Peter Burke. A Social History of the Media: From Gutenberg to the Internet. (pp. 13 – 60 of the origin, give out)

Session 6
Tuesday, February 26
Mediation and constraints shaping media contents.

Reading: Pamela Shoemaker, Stephen Reese. Mediating the Message (pp. 45–58 of the reader)

Session 7
Thursday, February 28
Field trip – Czech television.

Reading: Tracey, M.: Decline and Fall of Public service broadcasting. (pp. 3–33)

Session 8
Tuesday, March 5
Media and politics.


Session 9
Thursday, March 7
Media regulation: Comparing U.S and Europe.

Reading: Denis McQuail. Mass Media in the Public Interest. Towards a Framework of Norms for Media Performance. In James Curran, Michael Gurevitch Mass Media and Society. (pp. 69–78 of the reader)

Session 10
Friday, March 8
Media representation and stereotyping.

Reading: Michael Pickering. The Politics of Representation. (pp. 79 – 90 of the reader)

Session 11
Tuesday, Codes of communication, encoding and decoding.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>Reading: John Fiske. <em>Introduction to Communication Studies</em>. (pp. 91 – 104 of the reader)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 12</strong></td>
<td>Semiotic analysis and its application.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 14</td>
<td>Reading: John Fiske. <em>Introduction to Communication Studies</em>. (pp. 91 – 104 of the reader)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 13</strong></td>
<td>Media monopoly and constraints of ownership.</td>
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<td><strong>Session 14</strong></td>
<td>Advertisement and Its Impact on Communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 21</td>
<td>Reading: Naomi Klein. <em>No Logo</em>. (pp. 165 – 194 of the origin – give out)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 15</strong></td>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 26</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 16</strong></td>
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<td>Thursday, March 28</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Break</strong></td>
<td>Measuring the Audiences and Market Driven Journalism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1-5</td>
<td>Reading: Peter Golding and Graham Murdock. <em>Culture, Communication and Political Economy. In James Curran, Michael Gurevitch Mass Media and Society</em>. (pp. 125 – 136 of the reader)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 17</strong></td>
<td>Field trip – Czech press agency.</td>
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<td>Tuesday, April 9</td>
<td>Reading: Boyd- Barrett, Terhi Rantanen: The Globalization of News. (pp. 1 - 14)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 18</strong></td>
<td>Amusing ourselves to death? Communication and entertainment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 11</td>
<td>Reading: Neil Postman. <em>Amusing Ourselves to Death</em> (pp. 151 – 160 of the reader)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Session 19</strong></td>
<td>Uses and gratification: Media as tool for escapism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 16</td>
<td>Reading: Shearon A. Lowery and Melvin L. DeFleur. <em>Milestones in Mass Communication Research. Media Effects</em> (pp. 161 – 172 of the reader)</td>
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<td><strong>Session 20</strong></td>
<td>Media, popular culture and midcult.</td>
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<td>Session</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>April 23</td>
<td>Media and Construction of Fashion and Life Style.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Media as a tool of propaganda.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Public relations and spindoctoring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Visualisation of communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>Convergence of media communication.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Field trip – Czech radio</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
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</tbody>
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**Classroom Etiquette**

Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class except for emergencies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Co-curricular Activities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Co-curricular Activities</td>
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