

## **The syllabus for**

### **American Media and Entertainment Industries Comm 432**

**Annenberg School for Communication  
University of Southern California  
Prof. Chris Smith  
Spring 2011**

---

**Office: ASC 321A**

**Office Hrs: Thurs 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm; by appointment**

**Email: [christhs@usc.edu](mailto:christhs@usc.edu)**

**Phone: 213-821-5243**

**Class meets: Tues & Thurs 12:30 – 1:50 pm, ASC 331**

#### **Academic Integrity Policy:**

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School for Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor, or from the graduate program.

#### **ADA Compliance Statement**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

## Objectives & Overview

This four-unit, upper division course is part of the Annenberg School's new Media Economics and Entrepreneurship M{2e} initiative and concerns the economic characteristics of the American media and entertainment industries with an emphasis on broadcast media, cable TV, and Web video.

The M{2e} program is designed to provide every USC Annenberg student with a big-picture understanding of today's economic realities, the marketplace they are about to enter and the economic forces that drive and shape that market.

M{2e}'s primary goal is to prepare our students for a rapidly evolving world in which they can become successful entrepreneurs, launch media, communication and journalism businesses and join larger organizations equipped with a solid understanding of how to harness market forces for the benefit of their company or enterprise.

During the semester, there will be considerable time spent on media history and how the industries, as we know them, developed and why they developed the way they did. The course also emphasizes innovation and technological convergence, regulatory structure, programming strategies and effects, and the disruption of traditional advertiser-driven business models. Several methods of presentation will be involved in our weekly sessions. These will include my own lectures, those of other Annenberg faculty, and guest appearances by industry executives.

## Course Readings \*

**Required (All available at USC Bookstore, unless otherwise noted):**

1. Chris Anderson. *Free.*
2. William Boddy. *Fifties Television.*
3. Erik Barnouw. *Tube of Plenty.*
4. Jonathan Knee, et al. *The Curse of the Mogul.\**

\*(Available via Amazon.com, special-price hardcover)

5. Tim Wu. *The Master Switch.*
6. Course Reader #1 – Selections.\*

\*(Available via Magic Machine Copies)

**7. Course Reader #2 – *Encyclopedia of Television* excerpts.\***

**\*(Available via Magic Machine Copies)**

**Competencies and Evaluation**

Participation	10%
Quiz	10%
M{2e} summaries (4)	20%
In-class Exams (2)	30%
Take-home final exam	10%
Group Presentation	20%

**Participation**

I hope the reading, lectures, and your outside conversations/ruminations will make for lively discussions during our Wednesday afternoons together. Please come to class having completed all of the assigned reading and have questions/talking points ready when you arrive. Engaged participation, comprised by thoughtful questions and commentary as well as engaged listening, represents **10%** of your final grade (this assessment will be primarily driven by discussion section). I will take attendance each class session via a sign-in sheet.

**M{2e} Guest Speaker Summaries**

Periodically during the semester, as indicated on the syllabus, you will be required to attend a presentation by a visiting scholar or industry practitioner. Please write a 3 pp. summary/critique of the speaker's main argument and submit it for my review any time during the subsequent week. Cumulatively, the summaries will be worth **20%** of your grade.

**Midterm & Final Exams**

**The two in-class exams** will be worth **30%** of your final grade. **The take-home final examination due on 11 May** will be worth **10%** of the grade. There will be **one quiz** early on worth **10%** of the semester's total.

### **Group Presentation**

Early on in the semester you will be divided into small groups and assigned either a media company, or a current event that you will research during the semester and present to the class at the end of the term. **This assignment will be worth 20% of your grade.**

## **Reading & Assignment Schedule**

### **Week 1**

#### **Tuesday 11 January**

Syllabus review; overview of goals and expectations.

#### **Thursday 13 January: Basic Principles of Macro-/Micro- and Media Economics, Pt. 1**

##### **Reading:**

(CR) Thomas Sowell, *Basic Economics*, Ch.1: "What Is Economics?"

(CR) Gillian Doyle, *Understanding Media Economics*, Ch.1: "Introduction to Media Economics"

### **Week 2**

#### **Tuesday 18 January: Basic Principles of Media Economics, Pt. 2**

##### **Reading:**

Jonathan Knee, et al., *The Curse of the Mogul*, Ch. 2: "The Landscape of Competitive Advantage"

(CR) Thomas Sowell, *Basic Economics*, Ch.5: "The Rise and Fall of Businesses"

(CR) Gillian Doyle, *Understanding Media Economics*, Ch.2: "Corporate Strategies"

#### **Thursday 20 January\***

**USC Annenberg Media, Economics & Entrepreneurship M{2e} Guest Speaker:**  
**Erik Brynjolfsson**, MIT Sloan School of Management

"Digitization and Innovation: How IT is Transforming Competition and Innovation."

**12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM, Annenberg West Lobby**

### **Week 3**

#### **Tuesday 25 January: Basic Principles of Media Economics, Pt. 3**

##### **Reading:**

(CR) Thomas Sowell, *Basic Economics*, Ch.7: "Big Business and Government"

(CR) Gillian Doyle, *Understanding Media Economics*, Ch.9: "Media Economics & Public Policy"

**\* In-class Quiz \***

**Thursday 27 January: Early Radio**

**Reading:**

(CR) Alan B. Albarran & Gregory G. Pitts, Ch. 2, "The History and Development of Radio Broadcasting," pp. 17-25

\* **In-class screening: "Empire of the Air, pt. 1" \***

**Week 4**

**Tuesday 1 February: Radio Broadcasting**

**Reading:**

Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, Chs. 2, 5

(CR) Paul Starr, *The Creation of Media*, Chs. 10-11

Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, Ch. 9

(CR) Alan B. Albarran & Gregory G. Pitts, Ch. 2, "The History and Development of Radio Broadcasting," pp. 25-37

\* **In-class screening: "Empire of the Air, pt. 2" \***

**Thursday 3 Early Television Innovation**

**Reading:**

Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, Ch. 10

\* **In-class screening: "Big Dream, Small Screen" \***

**Week 5**

**Tuesday 8 February: Fifties TV, Pt. 1**

**Reading:**

William Boddy, *Fifties Television*, Chs. 1-3, pp. 15-62.

(CR) Alan B. Albarran & Gregory G. Pitts, Ch. 2, "The History and Development of Radio Broadcasting," pp. 37-39

**Thursday 10 February**

**\*In-Class Examination\***

**Week 6**

**Tuesday 15 February: Fifties TV, Pt. 2**

**Reading:**

W. Boddy, *Fifties Television*, Chs. 4-7, pp. 65-131.

Jonathan Knee, et al., *The Curse of the Mogul*, Ch. 9: "The Landscape of Competitive Advantage"

(CR) Miles Ginsberg, "What every family wants to know about TELEVISION"

(CR) Terry Teachout, "The New Media Crisis of 1949"

**Thursday 17 February:**

**Reading:**

**USC Annenberg Media, Economics & Entrepreneurship M{2e} Guest Speaker:**

**Steven Wildman**, Director, The Quello Center for Telecommunication Management & Law, Michigan State University

**12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM, Annenberg Room 207**

**Week 7**

**Tuesday 22 February: Fifties TV, Pt. 3**

**Reading:**

W. Boddy, *Fifties Television*, Chs. 8-11, pp.132-213.

E. Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty*, pp.213-218.

**(CR)** Christopher Anderson, *Television: The Critical View*, "Disneyland"

**(CR)** Gillian Doyle, *Understanding Media Economics*, Ch.3: "Economics of Advertising"

**Thursday 24 February: 1960s TV**

**Reading:**

W. Boddy, *Fifties Television*, Ch. 12, pp. 214-232.

E. Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty*, pp. 243-248; 260-265; 270-277; 281-290; 366-377; 403-410.

**Week 8**

**Tuesday 1 March:**

**\*In-Class Examination\***

**Thursday 3 March:**

**USC Annenberg Media, Economics & Entrepreneurship M{2e} Guest Speaker:**

**Irene Wu**, Director of International Research, Federal Communications Commission

**12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM, Annenberg Room 207**

**Week 9**

**Tuesday 8 March: 1970s TV**

**Reading:**

Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty*, pp. 430-440; 464-474.

Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, Ch. 17

**(CR)** Harold L. Vogel, "Television-programming accounting," pp.130-142;  
"Broadcasting" pp. 173-200

**Thursday 10 March:**

**CLASS SUSPENDED**

**Spring Break – 14 March – 18 March**

## **Week 10**

### **Tuesday 22 March: Cable TV & the Post-Network Era**

#### **Reading:**

Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty*, pp. 346-357; 490-503.

Jonathan Knee, et al., *The Curse of the Mogul*, Ch. 3

Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, Ch. 13 & 16

(CR) H. Blumenthal & O. Goodenough, "Cable Systems."

(CR) Ted Magder, "The End of TV 101..." pp.137-156.

### **Thursday 24 March: New Media Economics, Pt. 1**

#### **Reading:**

(CR) Gillian Doyle, *Understanding Media Economics*, Ch.8: "New Media"

(CR) Everette Dennis, et al., "Doing Digital: An Assessment of the Top 25 U.S. Media Companies and their Digital Strategies"

## **WEEK 11**

### **Tuesday 29 March: New Media Economics, Pt. 2**

#### **Reading:**

(CR) C. Anderson, *The Long Tail*, Introduction, Chs. 1, 2, 4

(CR) Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis, "We Media: How Audiences are Shaping the Future of News and Information" Chs 1-3

(BB) "Speaking With Soulja Boy, Rap's Social Media King"

### **Thursday 31 March: New Media Economics, Pt. 3**

#### **Reading:**

(CR) C. Anderson, *The Long Tail*, Introduction, Chs. 9-11

(CR) Shayne Bowman and Chris Willis, "We Media: How Audiences are Shaping the Future of News and Information" Chs 4-7

## **Week 12**

### **Tuesday 5 April: New Media Economics, Pt. 4**

#### **Reading:**

(CR) C. Anderson, *The Long Tail*, Introduction, Ch. 12

(CR) Alessandra Stanley, "You Are What You Watch"

(CR) Rana Foroohar, "Changing Channels"

(CR) David McCourt, "Online Video and the Death of Hollywood"

(CR) Martin Peers, "Internet Killed the Video Star"

### **Thursday 7 April: New Media Economics, Pt. 4**

#### **Reading:**

Jonathan Knee, et al., *The Curse of the Mogul*, Ch. 5

(CR) Anita Elberse, "Should You Invest in the Long Tail?"

(CR) Glenn Peoples, "The Long Tale?" (Printed twice: one for text, one for graphics)

## **Week 13**

### **Tuesday 12 April: New Media Economics, Pt. 5**

#### **Reading:**

Chris Anderson, *Free: How Today's Smartest Businesses Profit by Giving Something for Nothing*, Prologue, Chs. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9

### **Thursday 14 April**

**USC Annenberg Media, Economics & Entrepreneurship M{2e} Guest Speaker:**

**Anita Elberse**, Professor, Associate Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School

**12:00 Noon – 1:00 PM, Annenberg Room 207**

## **Week 14**

### **Tuesday 19 April: New Media Economics, Pt. 6**

#### **Reading:**

Chris Anderson, *Free: How Today's Smartest Businesses Profit by Giving Something for Nothing*, Prologue, Chs. 11-13, 16, 273-254

### **Thursday 21 April:**

**Group Presentations**

## **Week 15**

### **Tuesday 26 April**

**Group Presentations**

### **Thursday 28 April**

**Review**

**Take-Home Final Exam Due: 11 May**