

**COMM 207 :Economic Thinking
for Communication and Journalism****2 Units****Fall 2015**— Monday 3:30-4:50pm**Section:** 20400R**Location:** ANN L105A**Instructor:** Paolo Sigismondi, MBA, PhD**I. Course Description**

This course introduces microeconomic and macroeconomic principles analyzing contemporary issues in media, communication and journalism industries from an economic perspective. The course begins with two introductory lectures on economic principles and political economy for communication and journalism, and then applies these principles to three core industries/platforms: broadcasting, the newspaper industry, and the Internet. Each industry will be analyzed in a series of lectures focusing on its history, political economy, recent evolutions and current issues. Political economy is the discipline that explores and explains how markets intersect with government, and how in media and communication industries stakeholders attempt to translate their commercial power into political influence and vice versa.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

The purpose of this course is to teach communication and journalism students about some of the most important issues across the core media industries – commercial broadcasting, public service media, newspapers and the Internet – by examining critical political and economic factors that shape them. The course will increase the economic literacy of the participants and provide a consistent set of core questions and concepts – a tool kit – to help analyze, innovate, lead, and be successful in these and other industries. The students will leave the class equipped to understand the political and economic dynamics that are shaping the evolution of journalism, communications and media.

III. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Turow, J. (2014). Media today: An introduction to mass communication (5th edition). New York: Routledge.
- Doyle, G. (2013). Understanding media economics (2nd edition). London: Sage Publications.

The rest of the readings are on reserve at the USC Leavey library, or are available on line. There will be additional short readings distributed in class, or posted on Blackboard, on current evolutions of the industries analyzed.

IV. Assignments, Assessment and Grading Breakdown

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Class participation.** Students are expected to make informed contributions to class discussions and online activities, coming to class having completed all assigned readings.
- 2. Midterm exam.** There will be a closed book midterm exam on October 5.
- 3. Course project.** Students will conduct research in groups on a topic related to this course. The final presentations will take place in the last weeks of classes, and they must include visual aids and a short paper (5-7 pages suggested) to be submitted via e-mail to the instructors by 3:30 pm, November 30.
- 4. Final exam.** The final exam will take place on Monday December 14, 2-4 pm.

GRADING

Requirements will be weighed as follows:

	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation	50	10
Midterm Exam	175	35
Course Project	100	20
Final Exam	175	35
TOTAL	500	100%

The course measures an "A" as 94% or higher
an "A- " as 90-93%
a "B+" as 87-89%
a "B" as 84-86%
a "B-" as 80-83%
a "C+" as 77-79%
a "C" as 74-76%
a "C-" as 70-73% and so on

IV. Laptop Policy

Effective fall 2014, all undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors will be required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg [Virtual Commons](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

V. Tentative Course Schedule

Please be advised that this syllabus is subject to change – and probably will change – based on the progress of the class, news events, etc.

Week 1. Introduction to Course (Aug. 24)

Week 2. Microeconomic - Macroeconomic Principles and Political Economy for Communication and Journalism (Aug. 31)

Week 3. Labor Day, University Holiday (Sept. 7)

Week 4. Broadcasting - History and Current Issues (Sep. 14)

Week 5. Broadcasting - The Political Economy of Broadcasting (Sep. 21)

Week 6. Public Broadcasting (Sep. 28)

Week 7. MIDTERM EXAM (Oct. 5)

Weeks 8-9. The Newspaper Industry and the Print Media - History and Current Issues (Oct. 12 and Oct. 19)

Week 10. The Political Economy of Print Media (Oct. 26)

Week 11. The Internet – History and Current Issues (Nov. 2)

Week 12. The Political Economy of the Internet (Nov. 9)

Week 13. Telecommunications (Telephone, Broadband, and Wireless) (Nov. 16)

Week 14. Lessons Learned & Project Presentations (Nov. 23)

Week 15. Lessons Learned & Project Presentations (Nov. 30)

FINAL EXAM: December 14, 2:00-4:00PM.

VI. Policies and Procedures

A. Plagiarism

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity*

<http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.

This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

B. Statement for Students with Disabilities

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 (or to TA) 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. Website and contact information for DSP:

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

C. Stress Management

If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.

D. Sexual Assault Resource Center

The Center for Women & Men and the Sexual Assault Resource Center are one and the same. Student Counseling Services is a separate place that also offers confidential counseling and support groups on a variety of other topics. To schedule an appointment with Student Counseling Services, call (213) 740-7711 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays or visit the Engemann Student Health Center on the University Park Campus.

E. Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.