

**COMM 208 - Media Economics: Perspectives on Communication Industries****2 Units****Spring 2016**— Wednesday 12:00-1:50pm**Section:** 20401R**Location:** ANN L105A**Instructor:** Paolo Sigismondi, MBA, PhD**Teaching Assistants:** James Lee, Xin Wang**I. Course Description**

This course follows, logically and chronologically, the foundations laid out in the course COMM 207 Economic Thinking for Communication and Journalism. It introduces principles of media economics and then applies them in the analysis of various communication industries: Motion pictures, Music, Video Games, Advertising and Public Relations. The global dimensions of these industries are also illustrated in a media landscape shaped by the unfolding digital revolution.

**II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

The purpose of this course is to 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 principles of media economics that are shaping the evolution of the communication industries.

Prerequisite: COMM 207

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

- Turow, J. (2014). Media today: An introduction to mass communication (5th edition). New York: Routledge.

**SUGGESTED READINGS**

- Doyle, G. (2013). Understanding media economics (2nd edition). London: Sage Publications.

Available through the USC electronic library system:

- Picard, R. (2011) Economics and Financing of Media Companies. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Sigismondi, P. (2012). The Digital Glocalization of Entertainment: New Paradigms in the Global Mediascape. New York: Springer Science + Business Media.

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 February 24.
- 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 1:50 pm, April 27.
- 4. Final exam.** The final exam will take place on Friday May 6, 11:00 am – 1:00 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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

#### V. 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.

## **VI. 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 (Jan. 13)**

**Week 2. The Motion Picture Industry (Jan. 20)**

**Week 3. The Motion Picture Industry - continued (Jan. 27)**

**Week 4. The Hollywood System (Feb. 3)**

**Week 5. The Recording Industry (Feb. 10)**

**Week 6. The Recording Industry - continued (Feb. 17)**

**Week 7. MIDTERM EXAM Feb. 24**

**Week 8. The Video Game Industry (Mar. 2)**

**Week 9. The Advertising Industry (Mar. 9)**

**SPRING RECESS – NO CLASS on Mar. 16**

**Week 10. The Advertising Industry – continued (Mar. 23)**

**Week 11. The Public Relations Industry (Mar. 30)**

**Week 12. The Global Dimensions of the Communication Industries (Apr. 6)**

**Week 13. Media Companies in an Evolving Digital Landscape (Apr. 13)**

**Week 14. Lessons Learned & Project Presentations (Apr. 20)**

**Week 15. Lessons Learned & Project Presentations (Apr. 27)**

**FINAL EXAM: Friday May 6, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm.**

## **VII. Policies and Procedures**

### **A. Plagiarism**

#### **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

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](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

#### **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](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.

#### **USC School of Communication Policy on Academic Integrity**

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Communication’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by

others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, ([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as Communication school administrators. In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

### **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](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](mailto: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. Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.