

Theory of Communication Studies

MFCO 202



Semester 2

Please note: the following is a shortened example of a course outline as it has been taught in past years. As such it is **indicative only**: the assessment and schedule may change. If you require any further information please contact the department: mfco@otago.ac.nz.

Introduction:

All forms of media communication are social and shaped by our cultural and political environment. This is why we communicate in some ways and not others. Theory of Communication Studies provides a critical overview of theories of mediated communication in order to explain how we communicate differently to different audiences and publics. The paper investigates the centrality of communication to the formation of public space, identity, citizenship, popular culture, and institutions of power. The paper explores: the public sphere; citizenship, education, and health; news media reporting; new mediated sociality and new forms of digital work; communication as a form of governance; fannish and transnational uses of media communications; and the environmental implications of digital work and communication.

Aims and Objectives:

Students who successfully complete this paper should:

- Develop knowledge of a range of contemporary critical communication theories
- Evaluate the cultural and political assumptions informing theories of communication
- Explain how we are socially and spatially positioned as speaking subjects in public forms of communication
- Learn to critically analyse contemporary media texts and technologies
- Develop effective research, study, and oral and written communication skills through tutorial discussion, critical blogging, writing and presentation, and an exam

Assessment

TASK	LENGTH	%	DUE DATE
Blog	1500-2000w	25%	Weeks 5, 9, and 13 (Fridays)
Problem Exercise 1 – Written	1500-2000w	25%	Week 7
Problem Exercise 2 – Presentation	20mins; 1000w	25%	Weeks 12 and 13
Exam	2000w	25%	Exam period

Block One: Publics

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION, HABERMAS AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Key concepts: The public sphere, representation/ mediation, modernity and postmodernity, identity politics

WEEK TWO: NEW MEDIA PUBLICS/ CRITIQUES OF HABERMAS

Key concepts: Counterpublics, ex-nomination, digital citizenship, blogosphere

WEEK THREE: SECULARISM AND PUBLIC SPACE

Key concepts:Space and place, secularisation, mobility

WEEK FOUR: COMMUNICATING EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Key concepts: Cultural citizenship, hegemony, ideology, neoliberalism

Block Two: Ideology

WEEK FIVE: HAILING SUBJECTS

Key concepts: Interpellation, hailing, racialisation

WEEK SIX: COMMUNICATING PANIC

Key concepts: Moral panics, social/ cultural capital, subcultures

WEEK SEVEN: COMMUNICATING GOOD HEALTH

Key concepts: Biopolitics, biopower, normalisation

WEEK EIGHT: COMMUNICATING NEWS

Key concepts: Priming, framing

Block Three: Flows

WEEK NINE: GLOBAL FLOWS

Key concepts: Flows, diaspora, globalisation

WEEK 10: CELEBRITY FLOWS

Key concepts: Celebritisation, individualisation

WEEK ELEVEN: FANDOM AND CONVERGENCE CULTURE

Key concepts: Active audience, convergence, transmedia, participatory culture

WEEK TWELVE: COMMODITY FLOWS

Key concepts: Control societies, hacktivism

WEEK THIRTEEN: REVISION

Key concepts: We will be revising the key concepts from throughout the course in this lecture.