The University of Oklahoma
College of Continuing Education
Advanced Programs – Course Syllabus

Course Title:
Seminar in Mass Communication

Course Number:
COMM 6373-101

Course Description:
This course will provide a comprehensive overview of theoretical perspectives, issues and approaches in
the field of mass communication. The overview will encompass social scientific as well as humanistic
and critical/cultural approaches. I hope that this overview will provide frameworks within which you can
locate your research. By understanding these “mass communication perspectives,” you will be better able
to formulate research questions, build theoretically sound arguments and connect your work to relevant
research in the field.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: September 16-18 & 23-25, 2011
Location: South Shepler, 4th Floor, Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma.
Hours: Fri 5:30-9:00 p.m.; Sat 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Sun 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: August 18, 2011

Site Director:
Tamara Sutteer. Assistant: Anita Bailey. Phone: 580-355-1974; Local Phone: 580-581-2434; Fax: 580-
351-9674; E-mail: apftsill@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: Dr. Patrick C. Meirick
Mailing Address: Department of Communication
Burton Hall, Room 101
610 Elm Avenue
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 325-1574
Fax Number: 405) 325-7625
E-mail Address: meirick@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the
class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each
class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the Follett/AP Bookstore located in the Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900
Asp Ave., Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahomaunion.bkstr.com or by telephone
at 866-369-9713 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-5960 (outside the U.S.). E-mail orders may be sent to
oklahomaunion@bkstr.com. Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST Monday through
Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST on Friday. Summer hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST. Faxed orders may
be placed 24 hours a day to 866-223-5607 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-1557 (outside the U.S.).

Sage.ISBN 9781849202923. (Text prices are available online.)

3. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at [http://learn.ou.edu](http://learn.ou.edu); enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Note: The Follett/AP Bookstore is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through the Follett/AP Bookstore.

**Course Objectives:**

The main goals of this course are to examine theoretical perspectives and issues on mass communication structures, technologies, contents, audiences, and effects.

**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

**Participation:**

All reading should be completed before the first class meeting. A more detailed course schedule and syllabus will be posted on D2L and e-mailed to students. A critical element of the learning environment in this class is lively and well-informed discussion. All students are expected to make informed contributions to class discussion.

**Reflection Papers:**

Each student will select two of the reflection paper assignments posted on D2L. These short (2-page) papers are meant to help students focus their thinking in preparation for specific seminar topics, and they should respond thoughtfully and critically to the readings. They draw upon the assigned readings and are due on the day the relevant seminar is held (topics and due dates are posted on D2L).

**Final Exam:**

The final examination will cover relevant concepts and topics from readings, lectures, and discussion.

**The Post-Seminar Assignment:**

Students will choose a mass communication theory to review, analyze and critique. They will need to find at least 12 scholarly sources (e.g., journal articles, books from academic presses) that discuss or utilize the chosen theory. Using those sources and what we learned in class, students should answer the following questions in a 10- to 12-page paper:

- When and how did the theory originate?
- What are the basic tenets of the theory, and what assumptions does it make?
- How (and when) has the theory been applied in research and/or academic work? Discuss some examples of work based on this theory.
- How has the theory changed since it was first formulated?
- What are the strengths of this theory? Its weaknesses? Has it been criticized? Championed?

**Grading:**

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-Seminar Paper</td>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>In classes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Papers (two)</td>
<td>On posted date during class</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>September 25 (last day of class)</td>
<td>30</td>
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NOTICE: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy.

Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement

The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

Patrick C. Meirick, Ph.D.

Education

• 2002 Ph.D., Mass Communication, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
• 1998 M.A., Journalism, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
• 1989 B.A., Cum Laude, English, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota

Current Positions

• Advanced Programs Professor since 2004
• Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma, August 2002 - June 2008
• Associate Professor, Department of Communication, University of Oklahoma, July 2008 - present

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

• COMM 5383 Seminar in Political Communication
• COMM 5363 Communication and Technology
• COMM 6373 Seminar in Mass Communication

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

Political Communication, Mass Media Effects, Persuasion, Social Cognition

Representative Publications and Presentations

Representative Honors and Awards Received

- Junior Faculty Summer Fellowship, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oklahoma, 2003, 2005.
- Casey Dissertation Award, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Minnesota, March 2002.

Major Professional Affiliations

   Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication