

COM 4550 Spring 2006

International Telecommunications: Policies and Issues

Tuesday & Thursday from 2:00 –3:15 P.M. in 4028 Brown Hall

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Objectives Of The Course

1. To familiarize you with the various ways in which different nations organize their telecommunication and mass media infrastructures. To help you understand the divergence in terms of differences in culture, national objectives, policies and ideologies.
2. To help you understand how modern telecommunication technologies are drawing together and homogenizing nations, cultures, and peoples.
3. The technological and communication forces of homogenization in a heterogeneous world create controversies and debates in the international community. This course will also help you understand the arguments and ideological positions that underlie the international controversies surrounding telecommunication organization and arrangements.
4. To consider if these technologies become weapons of manipulation and disinformation in the hands of ruthless corporations and governments.

Text

1. Mody, Bella (2003). International & Development Communication: A 21st Century Perspective. Sage; Thousand Oaks.
2. Articles distributed in class or posted on the web.

Course web site

<http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kayany/intertel>. You will find the contents of my lectures on this website. You can also access the class syllabus in PDF. Links to related sites and review questions are also posted on the website.

Major sections of the course:

1. History of International telecommunication
2. Theories of international telecommunication
3. Impact of globalization and homogenization
4. International communication related conflicts and controversies

Class organization

There are very few introductory texts on this topic. Hence I will devote most of the semester to discuss the basic concepts and theories in International telecommunication policies. You will be able to understand and discuss the topics in the textbook after you become familiar with the basic concepts. Hence, we will keep aside the textbook till midterm and then discuss the chapters in the textbook. Please take notes in class. If any thing is not clear, raise your hands and ask me to explain it further.

Academic integrity

You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate (pp. 271-272) [Graduate (pp. 24-26)] Catalog that pertain to Academic Integrity. These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with me if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

Classroom etiquette

1. Please plan on being in class 5 minutes before class and be ready for class.
2. Please turn off your cell phones and beepers before you enter the class.
3. Please use your laptops strictly for taking notes – not for browsing the web or playing games.

Evaluation

There will be two exams - a midterm and the final. Exams are closed book. For each exam you will be given short essay questions. You should be able to give concise answers to the questions in half a page.

The final grade for the course will be calculated using the following formula:

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	40%
Short papers	15%
Attendance	05%
Group Presentation	10%

Short Papers

This is how you will work with short papers. Each Thursday I will assign a topic or article to read. You write a short paper (400-450 words) and submit on Tuesday. I will accept late submissions on next Thursday but not later than that. Your grade for the paper will be based on the quality of content. You get an A for presenting arguments (for or against) using new information. You get a B for making an argument from material presented in the textbook or lectures. You get a C for writing a paper that is not supported by data. You get a D for writing the paper.

Group Presentations

Form groups of three. Pick an international communication topic that you are passionate about. Research the topic. Create a presentation (Powerpoint, Audio-visual, etc) to be presented to the class (Duration: 20 minutes). Last week of classes will be reserved for class presentations.

Grading Scale

95-100	-	A	(4.0)
89-94	-	BA	(3.5)
83-88	-	B	(3.0)
77-82	-	CB	(2.5)
71-76	-	C	(2.0)
66-70	-	DC	(1.5)
60-65	-	D	(1.0)
Less than 60	-	E	(Failing grade)

Tentative Class Schedule

- Week 1: 10th & 12th January - History of International Communications and Technologies, International Telegraph, Submarine telegraph, International telephone, Wireless.
- Week 2: 17th, & 19th January - International communication and world wars, International radio and TV broadcasting, Satellites and INTELSAT, Allocation of the spectrum
- Week 3: 24th, & 26th January - International broadcast systems, International news gathering
- Week 4: 31st January & 2nd February - Modernization and media, Development communication
- Week 5: 7th & 9th February - Entertainment and cultural exchange, Trans-border data,
- Week 6: 14th & 16th February - Transnational Media Corporations
- Week 7: 21st February - International Copyright issues
- 23rd February – MIDTERM EXAM**
- Week 8: Spring Break
- Week 9: 7th & 9th March - National sovereignty and communication,
- Week 10: 14th & 16th March - Free flow vs. Balanced flow, Cultural imperialism,
- Week 11: 21st & 23rd March - Center vs. periphery, Cultural imperialism,
- Week 12: 28th & 30th March - Ethnocentrism, Tribalization and homogenization,
- Week 13: 4th & 6th April - New World Information Order,
- Week 14: 11th & 13th April – Group[presentations
- Week 15: 18th & 20th April – Group presentations and review

COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM on Wednesday, April 26th 12:30 -2:30 PM