

# **MCOM 413/513: International Media**

## **South Dakota State University**

### **Spring 2014, 3 credits**

**Location:** This course is delivered entirely via the Internet, through Desire2Learn.

**Time:** 24/7. For almost all of the coursework, you have the flexibility to work when it's convenient for you to do so. Weekly assignments are due each Sunday at midnight CST.

**Instructor:** Lyle D. Olson, Ed.D., professor, Journalism & Mass Communication (for more information, see the Your Professor link or my Profile at the Classlist link).

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Once class begins, e-mail me within D2L. I try to monitor and respond to e-mail several times a day.

If I won't be able to respond for more than two days, I'll notify you in advance. I also try to provide feedback on assignments and post grades within five days of the due date.

**Course description:** This course is a survey of international media systems, news, and related topics, the roles and characteristics of international journalists, and issues facing media around the world.

**Pre-requisite:** Undergraduate students should be juniors or seniors. For graduate credit, on-campus and online students must be admitted to the SDSU Graduate School.

**Technology skills/requirements/help:** Basic computer, Internet, and word processing skills are necessary. Taking an Internet-delivered course typically requires problem-solving ability. Basic computer requirements for SDSU's online classes are outlined on the D2L homepage. Technical support is available from the Help Desk at 605/688-6776.

**SDSU resources:** On the course D2L site (lower left side), there is a list of links to useful university resources, including the SDSU Support Desk Call Center, Briggs Library, and a Student D2L 101 tutorial.

#### **Course goals include providing students with**

1. An overview of global journalism and world media systems.
2. In-depth knowledge of media systems in specific countries.
3. Insight into how culture affects media.
4. A better understanding of media in the U.S. by obtaining a broader, global perspective.

**Course objectives:** By the end of the class, students will be able to

1. Identify journalists from countries outside the United States (on the bio quiz/worksheet).
2. Give examples of six major barriers to media development in the world's countries (discussion, final exam).
3. Demonstrate general knowledge of media systems from regions around the world (discussion, final exam).
4. Demonstrate specific knowledge of the media and journalism education of one country (discussion, reports, final exam).
5. Give examples of how culture affects media (discussion, final reports, final exam).
6. Explain how the United States' view of press freedom is unique (discussion).

#### **Textbooks & resources**

1. de Beer, Arnold & John Merrill. (2009). *Global Journalism: Topical Issues and Media Systems*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.
2. The media (1) you regularly "consume," with increased attention to international news, and (2) international media outlets, such as Al Jazeera, BBC, Reuters, and more.
3. Note on three books: *From Their Eyes, International News & Foreign Correspondents*, *Al-Jazeera: The Inside Story of the Arab News Channel that is Challenging the West*.
4. Biographical sketches of international journalists and foreign correspondents from previous students.
5. Reports from previous students on journalism education and countries.

**ACEJMC & SDSU values:**

SDSU's Department of Journalism and Mass Communication has been continuously accredited since 1949, the year national journalism accreditation began. The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies. Two of the important key values and competencies that this class touches on are:

1. Thinking critically, creatively, and independently.
2. Demonstrating an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.

South Dakota State University and the South Dakota Regental System also have values and competencies for students. Three that this class touches on are:

1. Social sciences/diversity — Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.
2. Information literacy — Students will recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, organize, critically evaluate, and effectively use information from a variety of sources.

**Absences, late or make-up work:** In an online course, you'll demonstrate your engagement by staying caught up with assignments, discussion postings, and so forth. For late work, I'll deduct points unless you contact me in advance and explain the situation. I typically allow make-up work, but I may deduct points, depending upon the situation. Keep me informed. My goal is to be fair to students who complete work on time and understanding of students who, on occasion, experience difficulty when life issues arise (Internet access or family problems, business travel, etc.).

**Attendance & participation:** In an effective online learning community, each student's attendance and participation is even more important than it is in a face-to-face class. To "attend" an online course, you must login to the class the week it starts and login regularly for the duration of the class. For this class, there are no specific requirements for the number of logins per week. You can, for example, login once for three hours (or less or more), or you can login 10 times for 18 minutes each (also three hours).

There are, however, weekly participation requirements. For each of the eight weeks, you're required to respond to a discussion question and comment on a minimum of three of your classmates' postings. In addition, for six of the eight weeks you're required to submit a media monitoring summary and read your classmates' postings. Further, you need to respond on time. For example, if you post your **initial** response to the Week 2 discussion question during Week 3, it will be late. A late post has less "value" because the class has moved on. (This does not mean, however, that you can't continue a discussion from one week to the next, which sometimes happens with particularly interesting threads.)

If you get behind in class discussion, you'll become isolated, hindering not only your learning experience but also the learning experience of your classmates.

**Student academic integrity & appeals:** The University has a clear expectation for academic integrity and does not tolerate academic dishonesty. *University Policy 2.4* sets forth the definitions of academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, misrepresentation, and other forms of dishonesty relating to academics. The policy and its procedures also set forth how charges of academic dishonesty are handled at the University. Academic dishonesty is strictly proscribed and if found may result in student discipline up to and including dismissal from the University.

**Special needs:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the coordinator of Disability Services (605-688-4504 or fax, 605-688-4987) to privately discuss your specific needs.

**Freedom in learning:** Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and University policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis, and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any courses of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is related instead to judgment of their personal opinion or conduct should first

contact the instructor of the course. If the student remains unsatisfied, the student may contact the department head and/or dean of the college that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Overview of course requirements:**

| <i>Assignment</i>                         | <i>Due</i>          | <i>Points</i>                |
|---|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Personal Global Awareness Inventory    | Week 1              | 15                           |
| 2. Discussion                             | Week 1 – 8          | 160                          |
| 3. Standing Monitoring Assignment         | Weeks 2 – 7         | 120 (6 x 20 points each)     |
| 4. Questions on Readings (textbook, etc.) | Weeks 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 | 100 (5 x 20 points each)     |
| 5. Biography “Quiz”                       | Week 5              | 65                           |
| 6. Textbook Study Guides                  | Week 7              | 120 (8 chapters x 15 points) |
| 7. Final project                          | Week 8              | 100                          |
| 8. Final exam                             | Week 8              | 80                           |
| 9. Discretionary participation points     |                     | 40                           |

*Explanation of assignments:*

1. *Personal Global Awareness Inventory* – In this assignment, you’ll reflect back upon life experiences that have helped you become more globally aware.
2. *Discussion* – As always, weekly discussion topics are a key part of an online course. In addition to required postings, you’re required to respond to a minimum of three of your classmates’ postings.
3. *The Standing Monitoring Assignment (SMA)* is a **key portion** of this class. It is, in essence, a laboratory exercise as you monitor international media. You then report on what you observe and read your classmates’ postings. Responding to your classmates is not required, but it is encouraged.
4. *Questions on Readings* – Chapters in the textbook and assigned readings pose some interesting questions. You’ll respond to the questions and submit your answers.
5. *Biography “Quiz”* – Past classes have completed biographical sketches of famous international journalists and foreign correspondents. For this assignment, you’ll read those sketches and complete a matching “quiz.”
6. *Textbook study guides* – Part Three of the textbook (chapters 13 to 20) present a ton of specific information. To solidify content from these chapters, you’ll fill out study guides with key information.
7. *Final project* – Undergraduate students will complete a report (in the form of a Powerpoint presentation) on the media of a specific country. Graduate students will conduct original research and complete a report (again, a Powerpoint presentation) on how culture affects media in a country or region.\*
8. *Final exam* – This exam will be open book. It will include questions on country reports, research reports, and journalism education reports from previous students in this class.
9. *Discretionary participation points* – These points will be awarded for students whose discussion postings, responses to classmates, and monitoring summaries are above average/superior.

\*This is the only assignment that is different for graduate versus undergraduate students.

**Grading scale:**

|                       |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| A = 720 to 800 points | C = 560 to 639 points | F = Below 479 points |
| B = 640 to 719 points | D = 480 to 559 points |                      |

**Online Discussion Rubric**

A five-part rubric for online postings is provided on the course D2L site in the Content area under Miscellaneous. The five areas — promptness/initiative, delivery of post, relevance of post, expression within post, and contribution to the learning community — provide guidelines on how to effectively participate in this key element of the class. Refer to this rubric for both your weekly discussion postings and media monitoring postings.

The course schedule is on the last page.

**Readings & assignment deadlines:** (more detailed week-by-week schedules will be posted in the D2L Content Area)

| <i>Week</i> | <i>Date Due</i> | <i>Main Topic(s)</i>          | <i>Assignments</i>   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--|
| 1           | Jan. 19         | Press philosophies & systems  | Chapters 1 & questions, awareness inventory, discussion  |
| 2           | Jan. 26         | News agencies, barriers       | Chapters 3 & 4 questions, SMA, discussion  |
| 3           | Feb. 2          | Press freedom                 | Chapter 5 questions, Press Freedom Index, SMA, discussion  |
| 4           | Feb. 9          | Culture & media               | Powerpoints on culture, SMA, discussion  |
| 5           | Feb. 16         | International Journalists     | Chapters 10 & 11, article from Nieman Reports 2010, questions on <i>Through Their Eyes</i> and <i>International News &amp; Foreign Correspondents</i> notes, biography quiz / worksheet, SMA, discussion |
| 6           | Feb. 23         | Print media in the Arab world | Chapter 15 study guide, questions on <i>Al-Jazeera</i> book notes, SMA, discussion   |
| 7           | March 2         | The world's regions           | Chapters 13–14 & 16–20 study guides, SMA, discussion   |
| 8           | March 9         | Journalism education, wrapup  | Final project, final exam, discussion  |