Unit Outline 2014
Faculty of Art & Design

Communication Evolution
9020
This Unit Outline must be read in conjunction with:

a) *UC Student Guide to Policies*, which sets out University-wide policies and procedures, including information on matters such as plagiarism, grade descriptors, moderation, feedback and deferred exams, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

b) *UC Guide to Student Services*, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

c) Any additional information specified in section 6h.

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**1: General Information**

**1a Unit title**
Communication Evolution

**1b Unit number**
9020

**1c Teaching Period and year offered**
Semester 1, 2014

**1d Credit point value**
3

**1e Unit level**
2

**1f Name of Unit Convener and contact details (including telephone and email)**
Dr Mathieu O’Neil  
Room: 9C14  
mathieu.oneil@canberra.edu.au  
(02) 6201 2283

**Assistant Unit Convener / Head Tutor**
The Head Tutor is the first point of contact for students who have questions about the unit. He will be managing the Moodle forums for each tutorial.
Scott Bridges  
scott.bridges@canberra.edu.au

**1g Administrative contact details (including name, location, telephone and email)**
Administration Officer  
Location: 9C6  
Contact number: 6201 2475  
Email: FADadmin@canberra.edu.au
2: Academic Content

2a Unit description and learning outcomes

This unit places communication within the context of relations of power. It emphasizes the relationship between communication technologies and social, political and cultural change. Students are introduced to key concerns and ideas in communication scholarship and the communication industries, with a focus on the transition from the one-to-many (broadcast) to the many-to-many (network) model. The communication of power and the power of communication are examined through a variety of perspectives, including political economy, the sociology of the journalistic field, and network theory.

Learning Outcomes

Students will have a familiarity with, and critical understanding of, various theoretical approaches to technology, society and change; a thorough appreciation of the contending discourses concerning decisive frames such as 'information' and 'globalisation'; and a critical understanding of social policy issues in modern communications. On completion of this unit, students will:

1. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the role and importance of communication technology in shaping, and being shaped by, society and culture;

2. Demonstrate knowledge of key communication theories;

3. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the main technological evolutions in communication and media history;

4. Demonstrate a preliminary understanding of how communication has been analysed within competing intellectual traditions that over time have become increasingly exposed to globalisation; and

5. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of communication in modern Australian history.

2b Generic skills

The University has five generic skills for coursework courses. By the end of a course, graduates will have developed the following skills and attributes in:

1. Communication - The ability to present knowledge, ideas and opinions effectively and communicate within and across professional and cultural boundaries.

2. Analysis and Inquiry - The ability to gather information, and to analyse and evaluate information and situations in a systematic, creative and insightful way.

3. Problem Solving - The ability to apply problem-solving process in novel situations; to identify and analyse problems then formulate and implement solutions.

4. Working independently and with others - The ability to plan their own work, be self-directed and use interpersonal skills and attitudes to work collaboratively.

5. Professionalism & Social Responsibility - The capacity and intention to use professional knowledge and skills ethically and responsibly, for the benefit of others and the environment.
2c Prerequisites and/or co-requisites
None

3: Delivery of Unit and Timetable

3a Delivery mode
1x 1.5hr weekly lecture (except week 8)
1x 1.5hr weekly tutorial (except weeks 1 and 8)

Remember: Please check the unit Moodle site regularly as important unit information will be shared there on an ongoing basis.

3b Timetable of activities, such as lectures/ tutorials/ practicals/ field classes, showing key dates and topics (Information might be provided in the form of a table)

Remember that tutorials will deal with the previous week’s lecture topic and readings.

Summary of lecture dates and topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19/2/14</td>
<td>Communication and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>26/2/14</td>
<td>Consumerism and broadcast media economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>05/3/14</td>
<td>Political economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12/3/14</td>
<td>War and muckraking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19/3/14</td>
<td>Network theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>26/3/14</td>
<td>Field theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>02/4/14</td>
<td>The digital revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>09/4/14</td>
<td>Mid Semester Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16/10/14</td>
<td>Consumerism and the hyperlink economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>14/10/14</td>
<td>Communication as production and organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>21/10/14</td>
<td>Online diffusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>28/10/14</td>
<td>Computational journalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/11/14</td>
<td>The utopia of communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WEEK 1 [17-21 February]

Lecture: Communication and power

Questions addressed in this unit include: How does power shape the media? How do the media shape power? What is power? What is the sociology of the media? What is political economy? What is network theory? What does the shift from broadcast media to participatory and computational media have to do with social, political and cultural change?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Unit outline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>No tutorials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WEEK 2 [24-28 February]
Lecture: Consumerism and traditional media economics

To what extent does the mass media portray reality according to a particular agenda? For liberal analysts the media plays the role of “filter” through such functions as priming, gate-keeping and agenda-setting. For radical critics such as the Frankfurt School theorists the media is an ideological tool of the “culture industry”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Introduction of unit. Details of assessments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WEEK 3? (Mar 4-7)
Lecture: Political economy

What is the impact of ownership (and associated phenomena such as conglomeration and interlocking directorates) on broadcast media? A famous example of a political economy approach to media is Chomsky and Herman's “propaganda model”.

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Discussion: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the “determinist” and “pluralist” views of the media, as defined by Seaton? Enzensberger made a prescient distinction between traditional and new media. How does it accord with reality?</td>
</tr>
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WEEK 4 (Mar 11-14)
Lecture: War and muckraking

From the Vietnam War to the Iraq War, media has operated as both enabler and critic of armed conflict.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended reading</td>
<td>Yochai Benkler (2011) “A Free Irresponsible Press: Wikileaks and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the Battle Over the Soul of the Networked Fourth Estate.” Harvard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, 46, 311-397.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tutorial**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise: Find an example of “worthy” &amp; “unworthy” victims.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion: Is the “propaganda model” an accurate depiction of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how media operates? What does this model leave out?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WEEK 5 (Mar 17-21)**

**Lecture: Network theory**

Social network analysis considers social relations (such as the media system) as networks of nodes connected by ties.

**Required reading**

| Katherine Ognyanova and Peter Monge (2013) “A Multitheoretical, |
| Multilevel, Multidimensional Network Model of the Media System: |
| Production, Content, and Audiences.” Communication Yearbook,     |
| 37: 67-93.                                                     |

**Tutorial**

| Exercice: Imagine a propaganda campaign. What would you base it  |
| on?                                                              |
| Discussion: What constraints do propaganda and counter-cultural  |
| resistance face? When are they most effective? What has changed |
| since the Vietnam War era?                                       |

**WEEK 6 (Mar 25-28)**

**Lecture: Field theory**

Bourdieu’s sociology conceives society as constituted of overlapping “fields” each with their own “rules of the game” and distribution of social, economic, cultural and symbolic “capital” or power. More recently Fligstein and McAdam have defined how “strategic action fields” emerge, deal with exogenous shocks, and change.

**Required reading**


**Recommended reading**

| What Bourdieu Adds to New Institutionalism, and Vice Versa.”    |

**Tutorial**

| Exercice: Map a social network. Define nodes and connections.    |
| Discussion: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the network |
| perspective? What does this perspective leave out?               |

**WEEK 7 (Mar 31 - Apr 4)**

**Lecture: The digital revolution**

The development of the Internet coincided with widespread deregulation of the telecommunications sector. With Web 2.0, new actors enter the media field, challenging the “rules of the game”. 
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Exercise: Map a social field. Define incumbents and new entrants. Discussion: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the field perspective? What does this perspective leave out? Preparation of oral presentation: You should be ready to announce what topic you wish to address.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WEEK 8 (Apr 8-11)
Mid-semester break

WEEK 9 (Apr 15-18)
Lecture: The hyperlink economy

The centrality of search engines on the Internet focuses attention to the distribution of hyperlinks between sites, which determine search engines rankings. Network theorists have argued that mechanisms such as “preferential attachment” (new entrants link to incumbents, thereby increasing their advantage) result in a tiny minority of sites concentrating the immense majority of links.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Discussion: What has been the impact of the blogosphere on the production of news? What are the benefits and constraints of the blogging model?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WEEK 10 Apr 21-25
Lecture: Communication as production and organisation

Digital networks have enabled new forms of collaborative (or “peer”) production as well as new forms of protest organisation.

|---|---|
Week 11 (Apr 28 - May 2)
Lecture: Online diffusion

The Internet, which Manuel Castells calls an “individual mass media”, brings renewed attention to how viral dynamics can be launched by people. What factors drive the diffusion of content online? Is it the properties of actors, the properties of networks, or factors outside the network?

|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Tutorial Discussion: The digital commons and online social movements share a faith in technology as the solution to social problems. To what extent does this constitute a belief in the “digital sublime”? What relations of power are left unexplored?

Week 12 (Apr 28 - May 2)
Lecture: Big data

Whilst advertising revenue declines for traditional broadcast media, new tools are presented as offering unprecedented opportunities for communication specialists. Chief amongst these are databases and algorithms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Oral presentations by students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week 13 (May 12-16)
Lecture: The utopia of communication

In a discourse reminiscent of Wiener’s cybernetics, transparent communication (“open data”) is increasingly presented as the solution to the crisis of liberal democracy.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Oral presentations by students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4: Unit Resources

4a Lists of required texts/readings

For Unit readings and resources in the University of Canberra Library

4b Materials and equipment

4c Unit website

To find your unit site online, login to [http://learnonline.canberra.edu.au/course/view.php?id=11223](http://learnonline.canberra.edu.au/course/view.php?id=11223) using your student ID.

Note that your unit site has a profiles page that displays your name and email address for the benefit of other students. If you prefer to hide your email address, [click here for instructions](#).

5: Assessment

5a Assessment overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment item (including exams held in the exam period)</th>
<th>Due date of assignments</th>
<th>Weighting (total to equal 100%)</th>
<th>Addresses learning outcome(s)</th>
<th>Related generic skill(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>UC Generic Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation and written outline</td>
<td>Weeks 12-13</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>UC Generic Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>Weeks 14-15</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>UC Generic Skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UC Generic Skills
1 - Communication
2 - Analysis and Inquiry
3 - Problem Solving
4 - Working independently and with others
5 - Professionalism and Social Responsibility

5b Details of each assessment item

1. **Weekly participation (30%)**

**Marking criteria:**
It would be difficult to do well in this task without being physically present, so attendance to lectures and tutorials is strongly encouraged. Students are expected to participate in in-class discussion by (1) reading the relevant readings available on e-reserve, (2) attending the lecture or listening to the recorded lecture prior to the tutorial, (3) organising their thoughts before coming to classes and (4) where relevant, completing the exercises.

**Marking criteria and grade descriptors will be used in assessing participation in the unit:**

**High Distinction:**
You regularly made contributions to the weekly tutorials that (i) kept discussions focused, (ii) demonstrated an excellent understanding of the material, (iii) showed evidence of reading the set texts and relevant additional reading AND
You listened and responded to contributions made by others without dominating the tutorial.

**Distinction:**
You regularly made contributions to the tutorial that (i) demonstrated a very good understanding of the material, (ii) showed evidence of reading the set texts AND
You listened and responded to contributions made by others without dominating the tutorial.

**Credit:**
You often made contributions to the tutorial that (i) demonstrated a good understanding of the material, (ii) showed evidence of reading the set texts AND You listened and responded to contributions made by others without dominating the tutorial.

**Pass:**
You made a number of relevant, informed contributions.

**Fail (NX):**
You made little or no attempt to participate throughout the semester OR Your contributions were almost always irrelevant and/or uninformed.

2. **Oral presentation and written outline (40%)**

Students select a topic from the list provided on Moodle and develop it into a three-page outline and a 5-minute oral presentation.

2a. **Outline (20%)**
The outline will feature a fully-written introduction and conclusion. The main part, a structured series of logically organised arguments, may be presented in the form of bullet points. Use Times New Roman font in size 12. All citations must be fully referenced, using APA or Harvard style. The usual provisions against plagiarism and academic dishonesty apply.

All outlines are to be handed by TUESDAY 6 MAY at 12:00 hrs (12AM) on MOODLE. Late delivery will result in 5% being taken off daily.

**Marking criteria:**

- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the topic.
- Extent and relevance of research.
- Coherence and efficacy of the argument.
- Clear and correct acknowledgement of sources.
- Clarity and precision of written expression.

2b. **Oral presentation (20%)**

During presentations students must take care not to read throughout, and engage with their audience.

Students will be informed in Week 12 whether they will present their oral presentation on Week 12 or Week 13.

**Marking criteria:**

- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the topic
- Good presentation skills (eye contact)
- Clarity and precision of oral expression.

3. **Final exam (30%)**
The exam will comprise a mini-essay and a series of questions. All questions and essay topics will have been discussed in the Lectures and Tutorials.

The exam will take place during the University’s timetabled Examination period at the end of Semester 1, 2014. Students are responsible for finding information about the date/time/location of the final exams.

Duration: 2 hours
Permitted materials: none.

Marking criteria:

- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the topic.
- Coherence and efficacy of the argument.
- Clarity and precision of written expression.

5c Submission of assessment items
All assessment items will be submitted online via the unit Moodle site. The first page of each assessment submission should include the following information:

Student Name:
Student ID:
Assessment Name:
Word Count (if applicable):

Students will be required to confirm the following declaration online at the point of submission.

Student declaration:

I certify that:
• the attached assignment is my own work and no part of this work has been written for me by any other person except where such collaboration has been authorised by the lecturer/s concerned;
• material drawn from other sources has been fully acknowledged as to author/creator, source and other bibliographic details according to unit-specific requirements for referencing; and
• no part of this work has been submitted for assessment in any other unit in this or another Faculty except where authorised by the lecturer/s concerned.

Assessment Extensions

In the case of documented illness, misadventure or other extenuating circumstances, you will be granted an extension of time in which to complete the assessment. See Extension Request Policy on Moodle. Your request for an extension is made on the Extension Request Form (on unit Moodle site). Extensions are approved by the unit convenor or the assistant unit convenor and not by your tutor. Requests for extensions due to work commitments, academic workload or lack of organisation will not be considered. Your attendance at university is no different to a professional workplace commitment and therefore such requests will not be considered.

Generally, the following are not grounds for an extension:

- Inability to have an assignment typed by the due date;
- Ordinary work and/or family commitments;
- Disk, drive, printer, internet or computer failure;
- Inability to submit on time due to parking or traffic/transport difficulties; and
- Time management issues (such as not having allowed sufficient time for the Plagiarism Self-Check to analyse and report on your work) and having more than one piece of assessment due (for other units).

Students registered with UC AccessAbility do not need to complete the extension request form. Simply have AccessAbility email the unit convenor detailing when the assessment will be submitted.

**Final Examination Extension:** If you are unable to sit the Final Examination because of documented cases of illness, misadventure or extenuating circumstance, then the University will allow you to complete a Deferred Examination. It is your responsibility to arrange for this examination by completing the appropriate application form available from the Examinations Office. In the case you take the Deferred Examination, you will be given a Withheld grade for Semester 1. Your final grade will be given later in Semester 2, 2014.

**Late submissions policy:** This unit requires the assessment item to be submitted on Moodle. Students should be aware that the assessment upload menu will be closed 5 minutes after the deadline and the system will not allow late submissions. Under the grounds of illness or other unavoidable circumstances, please consult the unit convenor about extensions as outlined above. A late submission menu will be opened after the deadline. A penalty of 5% of the mark will be deducted per working day. Late submissions do not get a written feedback, only a mark.

5d **Special assessment requirements**

(For year-long units only - when credit points are not counted until completion of the second unit. **Delete for other units**): Students enrolled in year-long units (consisting of a part A and part B unit code) will be allocated a continuing grade (CNTY) on completion of part A. Once the student has completed part B, the grade for part A will be updated such that the grades for the two unit codes are the same.

5e **Supplementary assessment**

Refer to the UC **Supplementary Assessment Policy**

5f **Academic Integrity**

Students have a responsibility to uphold University standards on ethical scholarship. Good scholarship involves building on the work of others and use of others’ work must be acknowledged with proper attribution made. Cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of data are dishonest practices that contravene academic values. Please see UC's **Academic Integrity Policy**.

To enhance understanding of academic integrity, it is expected that all students will complete the LearnOnline Academic Integrity Module (AIM) at least once during their course of study. The module is automatically available as a listed site when students log into LearnOnline.

5g **Use of text-matching software**

The University of Canberra has available, through LearnOnline (Moodle), text-matching software that helps students and staff reduce plagiarism and improve understandings of academic integrity. Known as URKUND, the software matches submitted text in student assignments against material from various sources: the internet, published books and journals, and previously submitted student texts. **Click here for further information on the URKUND text-matching software.**

6: **Student Responsibility**

6a **Workload**
The amount of time you will need to spend on study in this unit will depend on a number of factors including your prior knowledge, learning skill level and learning style. Nevertheless, in planning your time commitments you should note that for a 3cp unit the total notional workload over the semester or term is assumed to be 150 hours. These hours include time spent in classes. The total workload for units of different credit point value should vary proportionally. For example, for a 6cp unit the total notional workload over a semester or term is assumed to be 300 hours.

6b Accessibility unit
Students who need assistance in undertaking the unit because of disability or other circumstances should inform their Unit Convener or UC AccessAbility as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made.

6c Participation requirements
See Section 5b, Participation assessment and Section 6a, Workload in addition to the following:

There is an expectation that students will attend and participate in all lectures and tutorials. This is because participation through attendance is an important and significant component of learning design. Not only is this relevant to the gaining of knowledge and skills appropriate to this particular subject but it also applies to your degree as a whole. From prior experience, there is a significant link between a student’s attendance / participation and the quality of their learning outcomes. To this end, attendance records are kept to guide and inform aspects of our grades and feedback.

6d Withdrawal
If you are planning to withdraw please discuss with your unit convener. Please see Withdrawal of Units for further information on deadlines.

6e Required IT skills
Word processing; email; library database searching; RefWorks or Endnote or similar; Moodle.

6f In-Unit Costs
(Note: To calculate your unit fees see: How do I calculate my fees?.
The online UC Co-op Textbook Search is available for purchasing text books.)

6g Work placements, internships or practicums
N/A

6h Additional information
None

7: Student Feedback

All students enrolled in this unit will have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the unit at the end of the Semester via the Unit Satisfaction Survey (USS) which you can access by logging into MyUC via the UC homepage: http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/. Your lecturer or tutor may also invite you to provide more detailed feedback on their teaching through an anonymous questionnaire.

8: Authority of this Unit Outline
Any change to the information contained in Section 2 (Academic content), and Section 5 (Assessment) of this document, will only be made by the Unit Convener if the written agreement of Head of Discipline and a majority of students has been obtained; and if written advice of the change is then provided on the unit site in the learning management system. If this is not possible, written advice of the change must be then forwarded to each student enrolled in the unit at their registered term address. Any individual student who believes him/herself to be disadvantaged by a change is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Unit Convener.