

Course Syllabus
Communication Studies 147/Sociology M176
Sociology of Mass Communication
Summer 2017

Instructor: Pat Reilly

Time and Location: Monday and Wednesday 8:30AM-10:35AM; Location Humanities 169

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 10:45AM-11:45AM; Haines 218

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This course investigates the relationship between mass communication and social organization. It focuses primarily upon the substantive area of the entertainment industry (i.e. television, film, recorded music), but will also cover journalism, publishing, and content production on new media platforms. This course predominantly builds from sociological theories from the production of culture approach, economic sociology, and organizational studies. Furthermore, it will also emphasize the application of these frameworks and concepts, which may prove especially helpful for those who aim for a career in the media industries or those who just wish to be more thoughtful consumers of media content.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS:

For this course, there will be three parts of your grade:

Attendance and Participation (20%): Regular attendance is required in this course. In addition to allowing you to maximize this component of your grade, your attendance and participation will provide the foundation for you to do your best on the other elements of your final grade. You are allowed one free absence during the quarter; additional unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. If you have to miss a class due to emergency, please contact me, and we can make arrangements concerning catching up with the course.

Furthermore, your active participation is the other element of this part. You will not be penalized for shyness; I absolutely value quality and quantity in your comments. Besides, the more that people contribute in class, the more enjoyable the class becomes!

Weekly Assignments (40%): To aid in your understanding of the course material and encouraging enriching class discussions, you will be required to complete weekly assignments. These assignments will relate to the concepts from the lectures and readings. You are free to skip one assignment throughout the course of the class, thus you must do five assignments. I will give the assignment each Wednesday, and the papers will be due on the following Monday.

Late assignments will incur a penalty of one letter grade per day.

Final Exam (40%): There will be a final examination on August 2. The exam will be held in class, and it will consist of short essay questions. I will hold an optional review session and provide a study guide in preparation for the exam.

GRADING POLICIES:

The letter grade breakdown is as follows:

A: ≥ 92.0

A-: 91.9-90.0

B+: 89.9-88.0

B: 87.9-82.0

B-: 81.9-80.0

C+: 79.9-78.0

C: 77.9-72.0

C-: 71.9-70.0

D: 69.9-60.0

F: 59.9 and below

Regarding grading questions or disputes, consult me. Any re-grading will involve consideration and re-evaluation of the entire assignment. Though you may have an issue with a certain part of an assignment, it might be cancelled out by overly generous grading of another part. Therefore, you may end up with a lower grade.

COURSE MATERIALS:

The assigned course readings will be available at the course website. The course website is xxxxxxxx. You will find scans of the readings with the corresponding class session. Please read them prior to the session, print them, and bring them to class.

You will have to purchase the assigned Harvard Business School case studies and film. The Harvard Business School Case Study can be found through the following links below. Each will cost \$9. In addition, the film *City of Gold* is available for purchase through various streaming services. I will keep you aware if they are available for free on Netflix or another streaming service. I will provide the relevant links on the course website.

E-MAIL PROTOCOL:

The best way of getting into contact with me is through e-mail. If you have any questions about the course material or readings, do not hesitate to e-mail me. Also, if you plan on missing a session, please contact me, so we may find a way that you can catch up. I tend to respond to e-mails quickly, usually within a few hours; the only exceptions are on weekends, nights, or when I do not have access to a computer.

In the subject line of your e-mails, please put "SOCM176." Doing this will make sure that you get past my email filter and to prevent my e-mail client from mistakenly thinking that your e-mail about the class is a sales pitch for discount pharmaceuticals, a cache of fake Rolexes, or a fantastic financial opportunity involving a foreign prince or sketchy real estate investments.

CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS:

Following the practice of many professors in this department, there will be no laptops or tablets in class. While this minimizes distractions, it also encourages you to take better notes. Research shows that students actually perform better in courses, retain information better, and engage more when there are no laptops in class. Because recordings of each class session are available as podcasts, do not worry if you miss anything, or you can ask me to repeat any points. You do not need to transcribe every word of the lecture. Exceptions can be made in certain circumstances, especially if there are issues that prevent you from handwriting. Please let me know ahead of time, and I recommend contacting the Office for Students with Disabilities regarding any issues. Furthermore, please refrain from texting in class

OFFICE HOURS:

My office hours will be on Monday and Wednesday from 10:45AM-11:45AM at Haines 218. I am also available by appointment. I encourage you to come to office hours to address any questions that you may have with the content or the class in general.

DISABILITIES ISSUES:

In the interest of fairness, please tell me about any disabilities or medical issues that may require any special accommodations and provide to me documentation to us from the Office for Students with Disabilities, so we can make proper arrangements.

PODCASTING:

Course sessions will be podcasted, which will aid in your studying and will help you to keep pace with any classes that you miss. This should not be a substitute for attending class, since excessive absences will adversely affect your grade and will prevent you from participating and maximizing what you get out of the class.

RESPECT:

For this course, we will be covering particular topics that may touch upon issues that might be controversial or align with individual's beliefs, experiences, or passions. Because this course benefits from your discussion, responses, and sharing, I encourage you to be respectful of your fellow course members. Furthermore, I am committed to treating each member of the class with the utmost respect. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any issues with any part of the course and its presentation.

HONOR CODE:

You MUST adhere to the UCLA Honor Code with your response papers and final exam. All cases of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to the Dean's Office, where they will adjudicate a warranted punishment.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

June 26: Introduction

June 28: The Basic Economic Foundations of Media Production

Richard Caves. 2000. "Organizing to Collect Rents: Music Copyrights," in *Creative Industries: Contracts Between Art and Commerce*.

Wendy Griswold. 1981. "American Character and the American Novel." *American Journal of Sociology* 86:740-765.

July 3: The Superstar Effect

Matt Salganik and Duncan Watts. 2008. "Leading the Herd Astray: An Experimental Study of Self-Fulfilling Prophecies in an Artificial Cultural Market." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 71:338-355.

Anita Elberse. 2016. *Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson*. Harvard Business School Case Study.
<https://hbr.org/product/dwayne-the-rock-johnson/517059-PDF-ENG>

July 5: Genres and Conventions

Howard Becker. 1982. "Conventions," in *Art Worlds*.

Ezra Zuckerman, Tai-Young Kim, Kalinka Ukanwa, and James von Rittman. 2003. "Robust Identities or Nonentities? Typecasting in the Feature-Film Labor Market." *American Journal of Sociology* 108: 1018-1073. [Excerpts]

July 10: Gatekeepers

Ashley Mears. 2011. "The Tastemakers," in *Pricing Beauty: The Making of a Fashion Model*.

July 12: Understanding "the Audience"

N. Anand and Richard Peterson. 2000. "When Market Information Constitutes Fields: Sensemaking of Markets in the Commercial Music Industry." *Organization Science* 11:270-284.

Thales S. Teixeira and Leora Kornfeld. 2014. *YouTube for Brands*. Harvard Business School Case Study. <https://hbr.org/product/youtube-for-brands/514048-PDF-ENG>

July 17: Market and Organizational Structure

Richard Peterson and David Berger. 1975. "Cycles in Symbol Production: The Case of Popular Music." *American Sociological Review* 40:158-173.

A.J. Scott. 2005. "A New Map of Hollywood," in *On Hollywood: The Place, The Industry*.

July 19: Career Development and Trajectories

Pat Reilly. 2017. "The Layers of a Clown: Career Development in Cultural Production Industries." *Academy of Management Discoveries* 3:145-164.

David Rensin. 2003. *The Mailroom: Hollywood History from the Bottom-up*. New York: Ballentine Books: excerpts.

July 24: Cultural Capital and Taste

Carl Wilson. 2007. *Celine Dion's Let's Talk About Love: A Journey to the End of Taste*. Excerpt.

Omar Lizardo and Sara Skiles. 2016. "The End of Symbolic Exclusion? The Rise of 'Categorical Tolerance' in the Musical Tastes of Americans: 1993-2012." *Sociological Science* 3:85-108.

July 26: Cultural Consecration

Shyon Baumann. 2001. "Intellectualization and Art World Development: Film in the United States." *American Sociological Review* 66:404-426.

Laura Gabbert, dir. 2015. *City of Gold*. 96 min.

July 31: Interactive Communities of Production and Consumption

John O'Brien. 2013. "Muslim American Youth and Secular Hip Hop: Manifesting 'Cool Piety' through Musical Practices." *Poetics* 41:99-121.

Myles McNutt. 2015. "Constantine Proves that Social Media Still Can't Save a TV Show's Soul." *The Onion A.V. Club*. May 14. <http://www.avclub.com/article/constantine-proves-social-media-still-cant-save-tv-219252>

August 2: FINAL EXAM [IN CLASS]