



Boston University International Programs
London

Boston University British Programmes
International Political and Media Systems
COM CM 744 (*Grad Mass Com*)
Summer 2011

Instructor Information

A.Name	Alexander MacLeod
B.Day and Time	Mondays and Tuesdays (plus Friday 3 June), 1.15-5.15pm
C.Location	George & Peto room, 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D.BU Telephone	020 7244 6255
E. Email	
F. Webpage	
G.Office hours	By appointment

Course Objectives

The course, consisting of nine lecture days and/or field trips, will consider International Political and Media Systems from two related standpoints:

1. How political and media systems interact to produce national and international policies. The assumption here is that in a 24/7 global news environment politics and the media are becoming increasingly interdependent and are creating challenges for professionals in both fields. The rapid rise of the Internet will be treated as a major aspect of the course.
2. A special study of the acclaimed BBC documentary series “All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace”. Also consideration of the Channel Four series “Is the West History?”

In (1) above emphasis will be placed on the differing ways in which democracy is interpreted and functions in various nations and regions. This will involve comparative studies of political arrangements with a view to establishing patterns of political conduct. The class will also examine the current debate in Britain over the perceived conflict between the right to privacy and the right of the mass media to report freely and fairly.

In (2) the aim will be to make in-depth assessments of the two series as exercises in mass media communication. Class members will be required to view the series as a group and make individual live in-class assessments of the programmes.

Since they will be located in Europe, students will be encouraged to consider topics from a European standpoint. This may require them to adjust their customary perspectives on news developments and historical assessments.

In addition, key aspects of journalism in the digital age may be examined, including war reporting; the current trend towards celebrity obsession; and the extent to which media ownership influences political, social and cultural discourse nationally and worldwide. Contributions of qualified guest lecturers, as well as London Faculty members, will be an important element in all aspects of the course.

Assessment

The class will be required to take part in up to two written tests. There will be opportunities for students to make brief presentations to the group on topics selected from the overall course structure. There will be a take-home final examination on Wednesday 29 June, available for pick up from the Student Affairs Office at 9am, due back at 5pm the same day.

There will be a compulsory written assignment of up to 5000 words, on a topic to be agreed between students and myself. Deadline for the assignment will be 7 days before the Final Examination.

Particular attention will be paid to class attendance (including punctuality) and participation; roll calls will be routine. A reasonable standard of dress must be maintained at all times. Eating or drinking during class will not be permitted.

Overall marking: 20 percent class participation, including class tests and presentations; **40 percent** major written assignment; **40 percent** Final Examination.

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism:

<http://www.bu.edu/london/files/2010/09/ACADEMICHANDBOOKSU11.pdf>

Course Chronology

31 May	Course introduction: National and International Politics and media systems in a 7/24 World
03 Jun	Britain's "New Politics" – what they consist of and how they will play with the mass media "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" video (1)
06 Jun	World Perspectives: the case for context (AM) "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" video (2)
07 Jun	Blogging: For and Against – class debate
13 Jun	The Net Delusion: Is Evgeny Morozov up the creek?
14 Jun	David McNeil (guest lecturer) – Foreign Correspondence and War Reporting (<u>Note time: 1 p.m.</u>) "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace" video (3)
20 Jun	Reuters as global news provider – Field trip (<u>Note time : 9-30 am</u>)
21 Jun	Journalism, politics and diplomacy in the Internet Age – guest speaker Is the West History? video (1 and 2)
28 Jun	Revision

29Jun Final Examination (take home)

* **Contingency Class Date: Friday 24 June.** Should any class dates need to be rescheduled, students are obligated to keep this date free to attend classes.

Readings

Evgeny Morozov: The Net Delusion
N Carr: The Shallows

Additional readings may be posted on the course webpage: ***
(you must be logged in to view materials).